

THE
PRECIOUSNESS
OF
CHRIST
Unto BELIEVERS.

OR,

A Treatise wherein the absolute
Necessity, the transcendent Excellency,
the supereminent Graces, the beauty,
rarity and usefulness of Christ is opened
and applied.

By JOHN ROBOTHAM,
Preacher of the Gospel

עֲרֹר הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד לִי כֵן שֶׁדִּי יִלֵּן

Cant. 3. 13.

Εἰμοὶ ἔην Χριστός, καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος.

PHIL. 1. 2.

*Malim præsentē Christo esse in Inferno, quam ab-
sentē Christo in Cælo. Luther in Genes.*

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TO

The Christian READER.



How art not, I conceive, such a stranger to these times, but thou knowest, that there is a spirit of bitterness and contention among us; whereby abundance of Gospel-love is lost, and our affections become unprofitable unto us: if we could live more in the love of Christ; we should live more in the love one of another: this following Treatise being first preached (through the earnest importunity of many friends) is now printed for to elevate thy affections, and cause them to mount up with wings, as Eagles unto Christ, who is the delight of all delights, and abstract of all praises.

The Subject of this discourse is the peerless, and unmatchable excellency of Christ, wherein

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wherein is discover'd his rarity, price, usefulness, with the high esteeme that the Father puts upon him, in which respect he is precious to Believers. Love is the attractive Load-stone of Love: and never was there such a love-deserving object as Christ; upon whom should Saints place all their sweet affections that are to be exercised upon good, as love, joy, and delight; but upon him, who is the brightness of Gods face, and the expresse Image of his glory?

It will be worth thy time to study the absolute necessity, and transcendent excellency of Christ: he is precious and excellent in all relations, whether as man, as Mediatour, as God: he is attractive in his love, ravishing in his beauty, winning and delightful in all his graces: he is absolute gain, without loss, he is absolute, for all supply: in a word, all the riches of Gods love, the brightness of his glory, and the shining of his face are treasured up in Christ, and by our union with him we come to enjoy them.

Now this excellency of Christ must not lie, as a contemned thing: but it calls for the strength of our souls, and the height of our affections to be fixed upon it, There is no object in the world, but there is a will relating to it, and inclinable to close with it.

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it. Now what better object can the will of man have, than Christ? if we be not here, what do we differ from beasts? and a beast in the shape of a man is worst of all. 'Tis good for us, that God hath placed such sweet affections of love, of joy, of delight, and the like, in our souls; but it is much better, that God hath provided such an object for them, as Christ, who is the summum bonum, and the top of all felicity and happiness. It is pity, we should lose so much of our affections, as we do upon the world: when we cast our affections upon Christ, they be not lost: he onely makes them heavenly and gracions, and gives them to us again: if we lay down our lives for him, they be not lost, but gain'd unto eternal life.

Thus I have shewed thee, whereon this discourse is groundod: namely in setting forth Christ in his beauty, in his love, in his graces, in his offices, in his riches, and in all the operations of his Spirit, in all those rich and costly gifts, which he doth bestow upon Believers, redeeming of them with his precious blood, sanctifying of them with his precious graces, enriching of them with his precious promises, reviving of them with his precious love, comforting of them
with

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with his precious Spirit, and enabling of them with precious priviledges : and all this is, as an attractive Load-stone to attract and draw our hearts to him.

Now if thou wilt but take a view of all the high perfections and supremient excellencies of Christ, if thou wilt anatomize him in every particular, and particularize him in every excellency, thou wilt find him to be lovely in all the parts of his Mediatorship, in his person, in his natures, all Offices, and Graces, yea, he is the chief, or Standard-bearer of ten thousand : he is altogether lovely, he is wholly delectable. Now it is my earnest desire, that as God hath honour'd his Son, and Angels they venerate him, and Saints highly esteem of him, that, he might be precious unto thee, which is the chief thing I can desire for my self, or for thee, who am

Thine in the service

of the Gospel

JOHN ROBOTHAM.



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THE
PRECIOUSNESS
OF
CHRIST
Unto BELIEVERS.

1 PETER 2. 7.

*Unto you therefore which believe, he
is precious.*

 HE particle [wherefore]
in the beginning of this
Chapter intimates a con-
nexion, and consequently
the Apostles going on with
his Exhortation begun in the precedent.

The first thing he exhorts to, is, to
love the word of God, *vers, 2. As new-*
B *born*

The preciousness of Christ

born babes desire the sincere milk of the word. To this he doth both prepare, and also give suitable and agreeable reasons. His preparation is in the first verse, *laying aside all malice and all guile, &c.* his reasons follow the Text: and the first is Edification in these words, *That you may grow thereby.* The second is taken from the Subject, or main Argument of the word, and that is Christ propounded unto us by taste: *If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,* vers. 3.

Now that Christ is the primary Subject and chief Argument of the word, is declared from the fourth verse unto the eleventh.

First, in Believers adhering to Christ by Faith, set forth to us under the term of coming; *To whom coming,* saith the Apostle. Then we have the reasons of this duty. First, because Christ is the foundation of the spiritual edifice or building, called therefore a *living stone,* vers. 4.

Secondly, because Believers are thereby also made *lively stones,* vers. 5. Christ is the foundation, and Believers are the superstructure.

Both these Reasons are illustrated:
First,

First, *Christ was chosen and precious.* Secondly, *Believers were a holy Priesthood.* Now that Christ is a lively and precious stone, the Apostle confirms by testimony of Scripture, vers. 6. *Behold I lay in Sion a chesef corner stone, ἐκλεκτον, ἐντιμον, elect and precious.*

This Testimony is explicated by the contrary affections of men, viz. to Believers *he is precious*: To unbelievers *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.*

Unto you which believe he is precious: Here for exposition sake we must observe in the words two things: First, what is meant by the word precious? Secondly, what manner of faith it is, that is here spoken of.

He is precious, the word is τιμή, Honour; as if the Apostle had said, he is to you that believe an honour, or honourable. Praise, glory, and honour are promiscuously and indifferently taken for one and the same thing: But if we respect their property, they differ thus.

First, αἶνος, praise, is, when we make honourable mention of others: This is external, and expressed by the tongue or pen.

B 2

Secondly,

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Secondly δόξα, Glory is a reverend, and venerable opinion that we have of others : This is Internal, lying in the mind.

Thirdly, τιμή, Honour comprehends both these, being a testification of the opinion that we have of other mens excellency and worth, declared by outward signs, as respectfull salutations, uncovering the head, bowing the knee, and the like. We have a double expression, 2 Pet. 1. 17. Christ received from his Father *τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν*, honour and glory, as much as to say transcendent Glory : Glory in the highest degree.

The Hebrew word importing honour and glory, is properly of weightiness ; as Paul mentioneth the *weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *קבד* Kabad signifieth to aggravate, add, or increase : So must

* *Thema*
istud signi-
ficat ingra-
vescere, fe-
cit in Hipp.
Buxt. in
Lexic.

* we add excellency, price, estimation, and weight of honour unto Christ ; Not that we can really and substantially add the least cubit unto the stature of his Glory, of his beauties and perfecti-
ons ; for he is rich, and full, and absolute without us : But we must add con-
digne and worthy praises to him, and
so

so acknowledge him to be that which he is : We add not any worth unto Christ, but onely an agnition or acknowledgment of his worth.

I come to the second question, namely, what manner of Faith it is, that the Apostle speaks of? The Divine speaks of three kinds of Faith; Natural, Legal, and Evangelical. The natural Faith is to believe that *God is*, or that there is a God, *Hebr. 11. 6.* generally all reasonable Creatures, both Angels and men have such a Faith as this: *The Devils believe that there is a God, and tremble*, saith the Apostle.

Legal faith is to belive that God speaks Truth in the Scriptures, or that the word of God is true; Histories, Prophecies, Promises, Threatnings, every line of that sacred Text, as it was indited by the Spirit of God, they all breath out Truth, without the least jot or tittle of falshood in them. Now the Faith that assents to this is called Legal, because the Law, and particularly the first Commandement injoyns me to honour God; and I do honour him, when I believe that which he saith is true.

The preciousness of Christ

Evangelical Faith is to believe God in Christ. God is *objectum ultimum fidei*, the ultimate, or the highest object of Faith : And Christ is *objectum mediatum*, the mediate object thereof. Christ is the *Medium* by which we go unto God : By him we believe in God, 1 Peter 1. 21. and (saith Paul) we trust through Christ to Godward, 2 Cor. 3. 4.

True Evangelical Faith is that whereby the Soul doth roll or cast itself upon Christ, as upon a sufficient and faithfull Saviour.

And that this is the nature of Faith, is declared by these phrases of Scripture. To lean upon the Lord : The Hebrew word *אשׁוּׁ* to lean, produces and brings forth the word that signifieth a staff ; because we lean upon it : Now Faith in Scripture is set forth by both these terms : In respect of Faith, the Lord is said to be *the staff of his people*, 2 Sam. 22. 19. and they are said to *lean*, or to *stay themselves upon him*, Esa. 10. 20. Again, the word *אֲמֵן* signifies both confidence, hope and security, all which are effects of Faith : The radical word is used to express the act of Faith, Psal. 40. 3. And very significant and choice
to

to declare the work of Faith is that phrase **לל אל יחול** and applied unto David, and to Christ, *Psal. 22. 8.* As much as to say, to roll ones self on the Lord. *Arius, Montanus* renders it, *volve ad Dominum*, roll to the Lord : The Hebrew word besides the primitive signification of rousing, imports also a confident committing of ones self unto another. Again, **אמנא**, Faith signifies a steady or firm resting upon the Promises of God. It is said, *Exodus * 17. 12. that Moses his hands were steady untill the going down of the Sun;* *Loc. in* where the same word is used for steady, as for Faith. Now then seeing that to believe in God is to lean upon him, as on a staff, or a supporter ; to rouse our selves to him, or on him, as Creatures that cannot subsist happily separated from him ; and also to rest steadily in him, as in God al-sufficient, and the very Life and Salvation of our Souls : Certainly this cannot be done by an act of the understanding, but by an act of the will. Confidence indeed is a fruit of Faith ; but yet you must take it thus : As it relates to God in dependance on him for some future good, so it is hope.

The preciousness of Christ

But as it respecteth him offering himself to us in Christ at present, so it is Faith: And hence are those phrases of the Apostle *πληροφορηθεῖς*, being fully persuaded, Rom. 4. 21. *ὑπόστασις*, the substance or ground of things hoped for; and *ἔλεγχος*, the Argument, or Demonstration of things not seen, Hebr. 11. 1:

Having shewed what is meant by Precious, and what is the Faith that esteems Christ so: I come to the Division of the Text. In the words observe.

First, the Person esteemed, or honoured, *Christ*.

Secondly, the Persons so esteeming or honouring, *Believers*.

Thirdly, the Ground or Reason of all, implied in the word *Therefore*. It is a relative Particle, importing some Antecedent, or fore-going Reasons of the Preciousness of Christ to Believers, as—

1. That he is found to be a precious stone, *vers. 4.*

2. That Believers also are made by Him lively stones, as we read in the fifth *verse.*

3. There is likewise Testimony of Scripture alledged to confirm the Excellency

to Believers.

excellency of Christ : Therefore he must needs be precious.

The words afford us these Doctrines or Observations.

First, Christ is very honourable and precious. Christ is honoured in Heaven and Earth, by God the Father, by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, by his Angels and by Believers : All these put such worth upon him, That *he is the chiefest of ten thousand, Cantic. the fifth chap. vers. the tenth.*

Secondly, however Christ be undervalued by such as have no faith, and do not believe; yet he is exceeding precious to those that do believe.

Thirdly, Christ is precious to Believers, because of his proper and inherent Excellency, called therefore *a precious stone*; because of his usefulness, being a Foundation to build upon : Because of his blessed efficiency or operation, making them that build upon him to become *living, or lively stones*; and finally, because all these beauties and lovelinesses of Christ are not shucks and shadows, but Truths and Realities, being confirmed by a sure and infallible word of Prophecy.

The preciousness of Christ

I shall make bold to wave the first Doctrine, because the substance and matter thereof shall be laid open in the second, which was this,

Doctrin.

That though Christ be slighted and undervalued by unbelievers, yet he is exceeding precious to Believers. Where there is faith to believe, there Christ is highly esteemed of, and precious above all the things in the world.

Mat. 13.
44.

Hence it is that the Kingdom of Heaven is likened to Treasure hid in a field, and to a goodly Margarite or Pearl, which the Merchant having found he selleth all to buy it. Mark I pray.

First, *it is a Merchant man*, and Merchants commonly are well stored with money, and of the richest sort of men: It was much then for such an one to part with all that he had; surely that thing must needs be superlatively excellent, that could move him to do thus.

Secondly, *it is a Merchant*, the Hebrew מֵרְכָּשׁ which signifies a Merchant, doth also signifie a Seeker or Searcher, because Merchants do search up and down in divers Countries for their precious things: This notes the great pains that is taken about the Pearl.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, when he hath made up his resolution thus to forsake all, observe his policy: *He hides the Pearl and the Treasure*, craftily he conceals it and keeps it close, that so he may make it sure to himself, and that no man may deprive him of it.

Fourth, *He selleth all*, to shew that he values it above all things in the world; and would rather part with all, then miss of such a bargain.

Fifthly, *He selleth all with joy*: That which he doth, he doth with a very good will, so far from any sticking at it, so far from any repenting or wavering, so far from any changing of mind, that he persists in his resolution with a cheerfull and joyfull heart. Now what is the ground and reason of all this? Verily it is Christ, a Treasure, a Pearl of inestimable and unvaluable price; this is the thing that the Soul like a politick Merchant-man eyes all this while, and is glad to leave all to enjoy it.

See this in the Apostle, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of Christ; yea, he counted them but *dung*, σκύβαλα, *dogs-meat*, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω, *that*

that I may win or gain Christ, saith he, that is, that I may get more near communion with him, and that I may be satisfied with a larger portion of his fulness.

Moses also counted the worst of Christ better then the best of sin: Nothing can be imagined worse of Christ then reproach and affliction; yet *Moses* sets these against the pleasures of sin, and the treasures of Egypt: He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ better riches than the treasures of Egypt, Hebr. 11. 26.

Now beside these examples, I will endeavour further to prove and illustrate the Doctrine in this method.

First, I will shew the $\sigma\tau\iota$, that it is so.

Secondly, the $\kappa\alpha\theta\sigma\tau\iota$, how it is so.

And thirdly, the $\alpha\iota\omega\tau\iota$, why it is so.

In the $\sigma\tau\iota$ it shall appear by these Demonstrations.

**I Demon-
stration.**

First, Believers are very impatient of Christ's absence. Christ may vail himself for a while, and withdraw his Light and comfort from the Soul; though

though he take not away his love, yet he may suspend the acts of it: He may seem to frown, he may so abscond, so hide and eclipse himself, that the Soul for a while loseth sense, and feels not its own happiness. Now when it is thus with a Believer, Christ is gone, the comfort and assurance of his Love is gone, joy and Light is gone, O how dejected, how disconsolate is the Soul then! so far as a man is spiritual, the flame of love to Christ is kindled in him: * And * *Maling* then he cannot sit down without him. *presente* He is the fountain of all supply, he is *Christo esse* the staff of strength, the support of joy, *in inferno,* and the very life of the soul: O that I *quàm ab-* might see him (saith the Believer) Oh *sente Chri-* that I might live in his presence! No- *sto in celo.* thing in the World will content him, *Luther in* neither honor, nor riches, nor pleasures, *Genes.* nor friends, nor any thing else will content him, till he find him whom his Soul loveth, till he find the Lord Jesus Christ; whom formerly with unspeakable pleasure he enjoyed.

Secondly, consider that earnest inquisition and diligent search, which the Believer makes after Christ when absent. II *Dem.*

He seeks him diligently and constantly. First,

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First, his diligence appeareth in that he searcheth for Christ in the use of all holy Ordinances : Who so esteemeth Christ, the same person can slight no Ordinance of Christ, hearing, prayer, meditation, conference with the godly, and the like : He hath found such sweetness in all these, that he cannot give over his search and inquiry, untill he hath found Christ. Those Ordinances are (as I may say) a walk wherein Christ is wont to meet with his people ; a Believer therefore doth with great eagerness, delight and study put himself upon that way. If he find not Christ present, his spirit fails ; the soul is in a syncope, or fit of swooning, there is a swift and a sudden failing of strength. But Christ being once found, this is as life from the dead. The Ordinances therefore in which Christ presents and offers himself, are very precious to a Believer. The soul that hath once felt the quickning power of those Ordinances, will hardly, or never be kept from them.

Secondly, the true Believer seeks Christ constantly, he seeks him without intermission or ceasing. See a pattern of this, *Cantic. 3. 1, 2, 3. By night on my bed*

bed I sought him, saith the Church ; and what was the success? for the present she found him not : How then? Did she give over? no ; but she sought him in the streets, and yet she found him not, ver. 2. Well, she is not contented, but she seeks him again ; she asks the watch-men for him , such as were in place of Superintendency and Ministry ; such as pretended at least to have the greatest care of her : She inquires of them for him ; saw ye him whom my soul loveth, saith she? but even they satisfie her not: Therefore she goes further, waiting patiently for the Revelation of Christ ; and so at length she hath blessed success ; she found her beloved : It is not lost labour to seek and wait for Christ constantly and perseveringly ; such labour in the Lord shall never be in vain ; and verily they do highly esteem of Christ, who seek him so.

Thirdly, a true Believer doth not only seek Christ diligently and constantly, but also he hath a prudential care in keeping him when he hath found him. *I held him (saith the Church) and would not let him go, Cant. 3. 4. she came by him hardly, and therefore she*
will

The preciousness of Christ

will not part with him lightly, it cost her hot water (as I may say) to get him ; she gat him with much hazard and danger, much loss and suffering : and therefore she will not leave him for the greatest advantage in the world. She knows, that nothing under Heaven can countervail or repair the loss of him ; she knows, that nothing in this great and wide Universe, though never so lovely and desirable can be equivalent to such a Jewel ; She knows, that with him is the well-spring of Life, and of all blessing ; therefore she cannot be induced or perswaded upon any terms to part with him. Many of Christ's followers forsook him, and went no more with him ; but *will ye also forsake me, saith he to his Apostles?* Peter answers for himself, and the rest; *Lord, whither shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal Life, Joh. 6. 28.* as if he should have said, Lord, if we leave thee, we leave our life and our comfort, we forsake our own mercy : It was motive enough to stay by him, and to keep close to him, to consider that eternal Life, and consequently the very quintessence of all Happiness was with him.

him. The Merchant that found a treasure of great price, *went and hid it*, and joyfully sold all that he had to purchase it: and therefore he will not part with it for any good. This Merchant-man is an Embleme or figure of a sound believer, who when he hath found Christ, will not forgoe him by any meanes: no, but he will say of him, whom have I in Heaven but thee: and on Earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee: *Christ is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever*, Psal. 73. 25, 26. 'Tis the voice of the Church: *the Lord is my portion* saith my soul: not onely her tongue without; but even her soul and her spirit within speakes it with unconceivable joy and delight: she was in deep affliction when she spake it, *Lament. 3. 24*. Yet the apprehension of such a portion, as the Lord, was solace and refreshing enough to her. And David is in the same moode too: *the Lord is my portion and mine inheritance* (saith he) *the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage*. Psal. 16. 5, 6. He alludes to the manner of dividing the Land of Canaan to the children of Israel, which was done by line.

Oterq; quater; beati; unspeakably happy are they that have such an heritage: can we think now that they will be such fooles, as to part with it? no verily, they will not so dote on any thing in the world, as to leave Heaven for earth, infinite and eternall joyes for a short blaze, or a little flash of mirth, like the crackling of thornes under a pot: they will not be so overseen and besotted, as to part with such an heritage, as Christ is, rich, fat, alwayes fruitful, and never decaying, ἀφθάρτον, καὶ ἀμίκτον, ἀμολραντον, as the Apostle saith: 'tis an inheritance where there is no dirt, no winter, or withering, no decay or dying of fruites; but ever green, ever flourishing, ever bearing, infinitely profitable and delightfull to the possessors of it: who can be so foolish as to part with such an inheritance as this? If *Naboth* would not part with the heritage of his Fathers; how can we imagine that the Saints will part with theirs? *Naboths* was his but for his life time onely: but the heritage of the Saints is everlasting: *Naboths* was subject to many hazards and casualties, fire, inundation, robbery, blasting, wormes, and

and utter loss, as the event declared : but the heritage of the Saints, the portion that they have in Christ is quite above and beyond all such detriment : they will not then be such fooles, as to part with it.

Fourthly, consider the principle from whence flowes the soules bewailing of Christs absence, diligent and constant seeking of him, and keeping him with much care and jealousie when she hath found him; that principle is love. *I sought him whom my soul loveth*, saith the Church, *Cantic. 3. 4.* Now love is the inclining or closing of the will, with something that is at least apprehended to be excellent and agreeable to it self : I say apprehended to be excellent; because sometimes the object is not excellent indeed, but onely fancied and conceited to be such : but here the case is otherwise, as I trust it shall appear. In the mean time observe the nature of the will; it is *elicta*, not *coacta*, inclined and drawn forth; not compelled and constrained, not ravished (as I may say) or forced : will should be no will, if it were so : the will is absolute and free; it sits as Empress in the soul,

C 2 comman-

IV Dem.

The preciousness of Christ

commanding there in chief, as we say : no violence can be offered to it : or if there be any, yet it is very pleasing full of titillation, full of tickling and delight. I confess the old saying is, *ducimus volentem*, and *trahimus nolentem* : we lead him, that is willing, and we draw him, that is unwilling : but when the Father is said to *draw us*, *Joh. 6. 44.* and Christ also is said to *draw us*, *Cantic. 1. 4.* we must know that here is no compulsion, or coaction : but it is done by the sweetness and efficacy of grace : it is done by the secret operation and working of the Spirit, inclining the heart, and swaying the will : I conclude then, that if the will be so impassible, and cannot be forced ; Christ must needs be a Load-stone (as I may say) very attractive, and an object very tempting and alluring : else certainly he could never have such power over mens wills to incline them, to draw them, to bend them and bow them, as he doth : he could never make the *Wolfe to dwell with the Lamb*, and the *Leopard to lie down with the Kid*, as 'tis in the Prophet : he could never tame the fierce natures, and the ravenous dispositions
of

of persecutors; he could never change mens mindes, and alter the constitution of their soules, so as he doth; if there were not excellency in him super-humane, and above all that which any creature can boast of? doubtless it must argue the excelling dignity and preciousness of Christ, when our wills, which are subject to no enforcement, are so kindly and so sweetly swayed and commanded by him.

Again we must know, that the object of the will according to the mind of the Philosopher is something that is good: *bonum est objectum voluntatis*, saith the Moralist: whether it be *bonum reale*, a reall and substantiall good; or *bonum apparens*, a shadowish and seeming good, it is so; both are the object of the will: but Christ is altogether substance and no shadow, no lye, no falshood, no fuke, no varnished appearance of good; but the most solid, and absolute blessing, that is in the world; so revealed by the Spirit, and so apprehended by the Saints: and therefore it is, that he is so choyce and precious to them. That excellent glory, that transcendent good, that spirituall beauty, that supremi-

The preciousness of Christ

ment worthiness, that overflowing fountain of Grace, and the shining of Gods face in Christ; these make him to be the best object; these set a high rate and price upon him: these incline the will, attract the heart, and draw the love of our souls to him.

Again, observe that the object of the will must be a thing sutable; *bonum sibi conveniens*, a good agreeable to it self. Now such an object is Christ: he is most sutable and agreeing to us in all his Offices, in all his communications; sutable in his blood for pardon, in his grace to adorn us, yea in his very debasements to lift us up; sutable in his love for lost sinners, in his fulness for empty and beggerly souls; yea the *summum bonum*, the chiefest good, that we can desire, or be posselt of: this makes a child of God to love nothing so well as him: *there is none on earth, that I desire besides thee*, saith the Psalmist. If Christ were not very precious to believers, doubtless they would not overlook all the world to claspe, and close with him, as they doe.

A second thing illustrating the Doctrine is the *καρδι*, how it is so? there are

are foure things spoken of in the Scripture, which make a thing to be precious *viz.* the Rarity.

The Esteem.

The Price,

And the usefulness thereof.

First, the rarity and scarceness of a thing makes it to be precious: for this cause is the word of God, *viz.* the word of Propheſie called precious, 1 Sam. 3.1. It is ſaid there, *that the word of God was precious*, that is, it was rare in thoſe days: ſo is Chriſt rare in the world: few and rare they be that find him: *one of a City, and two of a Tribe*, as 'tis in the Prophet, Chriſt is a Pearl, yea a Pearl of higheſt price, as in *Matth.* 13. Pearls are rare in the world: the Merchant onely, that ſeeks farr, obtains them: there are more wayes to miſs, then to hit the mark: the ſtony ground, and the young man in the Goſpel came near the Kingdome of God, but yet miſſed it: 'tis rare to ſee a ſoul embellished and adorned with ſuch a Jewell, as Chriſt is: this then muſt needs make him to be precious. If things excellent were common, the plentiſſeſs of them would take off the price of them: it is

I. Illustration.

The preciousness of Christ

said 1 Kings 10. 21. that all Solomons drinking vessels, and all the vessels of the Forrest-house in Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of Silver, it was nothing accounted of in the dayes of Solomon: the King made it as common as stones in Jerusalem, as we read in verse 27. The excessive and superabounding quantity of that mettall made it so cheap and so worthless, as it was: had it been rarer, it would have been more precious: this then confirms the exceeding preciousness of Christ, because they are thinnely sown, and come up as thinly, that have him for their portion: the paucity and fewnes of such, as are enriched with him, argues his dignity and worth not a little.

II. Illustration,

Secondly, the high esteem, that is cast upon a thing makes it also to be precious; so is Gold and Silver precious, because men make great account of it. Neither doth Christ come short of this Argument: whatsoever worldlings account of him, it skills not: fools and mad-men cannot judge of excellencies: Let the foolish Gadarens esteem more of their swine, then of Christ; we will not lay him in such a balance: look upon God the Father, and see what reckoning

reckoning he makes of him : he calls him *choyce* and *precious*, as we read *1 Peter 2. 6. Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect and precious.* God hath honoured Christ, & committed all Judgment even the full administration of all things to him, *that all men might honour him.* Christ was in the bosome of the Father ; he was from all eternity privie to all his counsels and decrees, as we find *Prov. 8. 22, 23. 24. &c. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old :* the word **IND** there used is put for eternity, *à parte antè*, as we say : as if Christ should have said ; even from all eternity, before his works made in the Creation of the world I was my fathers Darling : *when he made the Heavens, girded the Sea ; and gave the unresistable decree,* that it should keep in its bounds, *I was as one brought up with him ; I was as a child with the Father ; I was daily his delight :* the originall word is **ששועים** delights in the plural number, intimating that the eternall Sonne was the greatest delight of his Father : he was variety of delights unto him : while God was making of the world, he took infinite pleasure

sure in him; in so much that he made all things by him: every creature hath a beam of the Fathers wisdom in it; and the wisdom of God is the Sonne. This is a great mystery: but God speaks of it in termes very quaint and familiar. Christ speaking of the dayes of eternity and everlastingness, saith that he *was alwayes rejoycing before God*; the word is **תקנח** as much as to say, *sporting greatly*; a metaphor, or simile taken from little ones, which sport and play before their Parents. Christ must needs be precious, being thus highly esteemed of the Father. And to this head of Argumentation we may add the great and high account that the most excellent of all Gods Creation, the holy Angels have of him, they all worship him, and adore him, *Hebr. 1. 6.* yea they doe exceedingly desire to *stoop down and pry* into the great mystery of our Redemption by Christ, as the words **ἐπιθυμοῦσιν** and **περὶ αὐτοῦ**, *1 Peter 1. 12* do import: where the Apostle alludes to the manner of the *Cherubims* looking down into the Mercy seat: this is the study, yea, this is the delight and recreation of the elect
Angels

Angels to look into the severall scopes of our salvation by Jesus Christ, to behold the whole frame and fabrick of it, to observe all the parts of it from the beginning to the end, and the glorious attributes of God, his wisdom, his power, his Justice, his Mercy, all shining and glittering in it like bright Starrs in the firmament: this, I say, is their work: yea this is their festivity and past-time. Then let the profane ones of the world think what they will of Christ; let them slight him, and scorn him, and cast him at their heeles, as they doe; let them trample upon his blood and passion, as their wicked manner is, making it a common and worthless thing; let them despise those high and celestiall Mysteries of his Mediatorship; we need not care for their thoughts; it is enough for us, that God the Father hath honoured and exalted him, that the holy Angels do venerate and worship him; yea and all the Saints do magnifie him, and count him very precious: the opinion, that one of the least of these hath of Christ, is more to be regarded, then the Judgement of the wisest and most judicious worldlings,
that

that are. The Preacher saith, that a wise mans heart is at his right hand; but a fools at his left, Eccles. 10. 2 what is the meaning of this? We know, that naturally every mans heart is placed on the left side: therefore surely that sentence aimeth at something higher then Nature: doubtless then Heavenly things are figured by the right hand, and Earthly by the left. The first is the choyce of the Saints: they are therefore those wise ones, whose heart is at their right hand: the other is the delight of Heathenish and carnal people: they then are the fools, whose heart is on their left hand: and here is the true reason, why the men of this world doe despise Christ, their heart is a left-handed heart (as I may say) they savour and relish nothing but earthly things: and therefore Christ and the glorious things of the Gospel are lightly set by: such wisdom is too high for fools, as Solomon saith, they cannot attain unto it. Even the Heathen Philosophers as wise as they were, could not reach it: they were so farr from embracnig it, that they counted it very foolishness: and be it so (saith the Apostle, for he doth

doth after a sort gratifie them) yet the foolishness of God is wiser then men ; and the weakness of God is stronger then men.

It skills not then what the men of the world do think of Christ : but what esteem God, and his holy Angels, and the Saints illuminated and enlightned by the Spirit of God have of him : if they count him precious ; this is an Argument irrefragable , and a proof beyond all exception, that he is so indeed.

Thirdly, the great and excessive price, that is given for a thing , doth likewise render it very precious. Precious things

III. Illustration.

have their denomination from this Argument. The oyl . wherewith Mary anoynted Christ , was called precious in this respect ; *this oyntment might have been sold for much , and given to the poor.*

Thus also the life of a man is said to be precious, *Proverb. 6. 26.* because he will part with one thing after another , till all be gone to save it : as we see in the *Egyptians* , who parted first with their mony, after that with their cattell ; and last of all with their Lands ; and all to buy bread to save their precious lives. Now this also doth set forth the preciousness of Christ : but who shall va-

lue

lue him? Who shall set the price upon
 him? not men of corrupt minds, not
 people of depraved affections: for they
 will set too low a rate upon him. *Judas*
sold him, and the High-Priests bought
him for 30. pieces of silver; a goodly
price (saith Christ) that I was prised at
of them Zach. 11. 13. Magnificum pre-
tium, as Junius renders it: a very wor-
thy price, I promise you: ironically spo-
ken, meaning nothing less; and yet
he was no less then the eternall Jehovah,
that was so prised: Jehovah said unto
me; cast it unto the potter; a goodly price;
that I was prised at of them. But they did
 thus to fulfill the good Counsel and
 purpose of God for others, that would
 esteem more highly of him. There be
 them in the world, that do enhaunse
 the price of Christ, and value him at
 the highest rate: though some will not
 part with a beastly lust for him; though
 like hogs they count the base wash and
 figge to be far sweeter: yet there be
 others, that know well the worth of
 him: there be others that are willing to
 forsake all for him: *we have forsaken all*
(saith Peter) and have followed thee,
Matth. 19. 27. The Merchant, of whom
 you

you heard before, sold all to buy the precious pearle: he valued it above all things in the world, and was willing to leave all for it. The holy Martyrs thought not their very lives, and their heart-bloud too dear for Christ: so it is said, that they *loved not their lives unto the death*, Revel. 12. 11. that is, they despised their lives in comparison of Christ: they exposed their bodies to horrible and painfull deaths, their temporall estates to the spoyl, and their persons to all manner of shame and contempt for the cause of Christ: they thought nothing too hot for him. A soul, that by Faith hath sense of the worth of Christ, will willingly give all for him, will go away rejoycing, and will think his penny-worth to be very good.

Fourthly, the usefulness and profit-IV. *Illustration.*
 ableness of a thing makes it also to be precious: in this sense are the fruits of the Earth called precious, as we read, Deut. 33. 14. there the precious fruits put forth by those heavenly luminaries, the Sun and Moon, are a part of Josephs blessing: and precious they were, because very usefull and serviceable to
 the

the life of man : and the influence of those heavenly bodies by a course, which God hath constituted and set in Nature, made them the more usefull, and therefore the more precious. So also are the afflicted and persecuted Saints said to bear precious seed, *Psal. 126. 6.* because their sufferings shall profit them much in the end : such seed shall bring forth weighty sheaves of joy at the last. Now then, to come to the point, that we drive at, in this manner doth the Scripture hold forth Christ as precious : he is very precious ; because he is very usefull : he is usefull for many things, yea for all things ; but especially for these two,

viz. { Justification.
Sanctification.

First, Christ is usefull for Justification : he is the onely mine-pit of this treasure : the golden and precious veines of it run along in him onely. *That he might be just, which believeth in Jesus, saith the Apostle, Rom. 26. ἐκ πίστεως ἰησοῦ, which is of the faith of Jesus ;* that is which seek not Justification by their own righteousness, *viz.* by the works of the Law ; but by Christ alone : and hence

hence we are said to be made *the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 4. 21. mark, I pray. The Apostle doth disertly and emphatically add the clause *ἐν αὐτῷ in him*, that he may take away all conceit of inherence in us, and establish the Doctrine of imputation: as Christ is made sin in us by imputation: so we are made righteousness in him by the same way. St. *Augustines* place, which *Beza* cites, is a most full commentary: God the Father (saith he) made him to be sin, who knew no sin; that we might be the righteousness of God, not our own, and in him, that is, in Christ, not in our selves. And being thus justified, we are so righteous, as if we were righteousness it self. It is Christ alone, that can administer life and righteousness: it is he alone, *that bindes up the broken-hearted, open: the prison dores, proclaimes Liberty to Captives, and the acceptable year of the Lord, or the Lords year of good will: the Quire of the heavenly host sang good will towards men*, when this accepted and welcome year was come, *Luke 2. 14.* This was Christs work: *the Law was too weak for it: that could kill, but not make a-*

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live.

alive. Christ alone bare the whole weight of his Fathers wrath, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness: none but he was of use for this; and therefore he must needs be precious.

Secondly, he is likewise usefull for Sanctification, that Spirit alone, which Christ sends forth, is of power and ability to instill and breath grace into us, and so make us meet vessels for the heavenly masters use. It is Christ, that stamps afresh the impression of Gods Image defaced and decayed in our souls: it is he that restores the life of God in man, lost by sin, by the blessed influx and droppings of his grace *we come to put on the new-man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of him that created him, as the Apostle speaks, Coloss. 3. 10.* he uses a Metaphor of putting on taken from garments, to shew that those new qualities of the soul are added as Vennet and beautifull ornaments to our nature: the substance of the soul is not changed, as some have foolishly dream't; but onely it puts on new properties and affections, new powers and abilities: and this benefit

we derive from Christ.

The parts of Sanctification are mortification, a dying unto sin, and vivification, a living unto righteousness: now both these come by vertue of our implantation, inserting, or ingrafting into Christ: the first when we are implanted into his death, and the second is a fruit of his resurrection: Christ reviving, his members could not lie dead: a living head and dead members were a Monster never seen in nature. Nevertheless observe this; that though we are sanctified by the death and resurrection of Christ: yet his death is the *Primum mobile*, as I may say, that strikes the first stroke, that is the meritorious cause of our sanctification, and hence is that saying of the Apostle, *Rom. 6.5.* If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death; we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: this is an elegant metaphor, representing unto us, that as plants engrafted do receive moisture, juyce, and nourishment from the stock, whereby they sprout out, budd, and bear fruit; so we being as it were inserted into Christ, do receive vigour and life from

him , whereby we walk in the Spirit, and become spiritual , holy , gracious, and active in all good works. Christ is the Olive tree, that standeth before the Ruler of the whole Earth, and emptieth it self by the pipes and conduits of his word into the golden Candlesticks of his Church, Zach. 4. Light and grace in the Ministration of holy Ordinances flow from him : he is the head and seat of spiritual influence, from which the whole mystical body receives breath, life, and motion : this is the Apostles simile , Coloss. 2. 19. He makes there Christ to be the Head, and the Church the body knit together by certain joynts , and ligaments , as we see it is in nature : and by this means it hath convenient nourishment ministred to all parts , whereby it increaseth with the increase of God , that is, with mighty and most blessed increasings. Christ hath goodness enough for himself, and for all his Members : he is a Fountain never drie ; and the Philosophers property of good agrees to him most of all : *Bonum est sui communicativum* : that which is good spares not, but communicates it self : this is most true of Christ : his grace is diffusive

five like water, of which the Naturalist
 saith, that it is difficultly contained
 within its own bounds; but easily
 within the bounds of some other thing.
 Christ is that sun of righteousness,
 that compasseth the whole world en-
 lighting, warming, and cherishing
 every one of his elect with his beames,
 of his fulness we all receive, and grace
 for grace, saith the Apostle, *John* 1. 16.
χαρις ἀντὶ χάριτος, that is, abundant
 grace, or graces sutable to his own.
 The first day of union a Believer en-
 joyes this participation of grace. Uni-
 on is the ground of Communion. We
 must remember also that Christ did san-
 ctifie himself to the end, that we might
 be sanctified: *for their sakes I sanctifie my*
self, that they also might be sanctified
through the Truth, saith Christ, *Joh.* 17.
 19. Christ is the principal cause of
 our Sanctification: we are sanctified
 virtually by his sanctifying of himself;
 he being set apart, and separated from
 sinners, such as are by his Spirit and by
 faith knit to him, must needs be also se-
 parated from the world to walk with
 God in holiness of life and conversati-
 on. Thus much of the *καὶ δὲ*, demon-
 strating

strating and declaring how Christ is precious.

I come now to the third thing, which is the *διότι*, shewing why it is so?

There be many reasons and causes why Believers do esteem so highly of Christ, as they do.

I. Reason. First, believers are in some measure convinced of their most miserable and wretched condition without him: and also of the impotency of the creature in respect of any help and deliverance in that condition.

First, when the soul findes it self in darkness without any Light; lying under shame and dishonour; under the guilt of sin, and not able to deliver it self: this cannot but make it look out for it self, and seek with great importunity for a Saviour. The Dove could find no rest for the soale of her foot, till she returned into the Ark. It is a perfect hyeroglyphick or resemblance of a wounded Spirit, as *Solomon* calls it; when it is as the blessed Redeemer was *πεπλυντος*, *surrounded with sorrow*; and it is full of restless vexations, fluctuating and tumbled up and down in a whole Ocean

Ocean of perplexities and feares, and can see no shoar, no Land, no creek, or haven of comfort: then it must into the Ark; then it uses the soliloquie of the *Psalmist*; *return unto thy rest o my soul*: then it cries out with the blessed Martyr, *o! none but Christ, none but Christ*: there's my Ark, there's my rest, there's my refuge; there I shall find release and refreshment, or else no where. Christ will be a calm to me after a storm: he will dispell and drive away all these clouds: he will hold my head above water, and keep me from sinking; he will be light and joy, and unspeakable solace after all these distempers: thus the poor afflicted soul, as a *prisoner of hope* (as the Prophet speakes *Zach. 9. 12.*) returns unto Christ, as to its strong hold. The miserable soul seeks for cure; *the whole need not the Physician* (saith Christ) *but the sick*: sin-sick sinners will enquire and seek after the Physician of souls. The sense of misery is the *primum mobile*, the first mover, that sets us on seeking for Christ. The more we know our own misery: the more we know how to prize Christ, and set a true value upon him.

The preciousness of Christ

Again, Believers are likewise convinced of the impotency and weakness of the creature, in respect of any help or succour that it can afford. *None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, Psal. 49. 7.* if not redemption from temporal death, much less from eternal. *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams (saith the Prophet) or with ten thousand rivers of oyl? shall I give my first born for my transgression: the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* The truth is, should all the Angels in Heaven, and righteous men upon Earth joyn their goodness together, and offer it up to God a sacrifice: it would not be sufficient to expiate so much as one sin. Now when the soul is sensible of this, it crieth out (as *Peter* in another case) help Lord, or else I perish.

Solomon saith, that as good comes from a far Country, so is cold water to a thirsty soul, *Prov. 25. 25.* So it is with a poor distressed soul, when it seeth it self as it were in a far Countrey, far from God, far from joy, and far from any deliverance in it self, or in any other; then if one bring him newes of a Saviour,

Saviour, of a Redeemer, this is welcome newes indeed ; ⁴ this is as cold water to a thirsty soul.

An instance of this is seen in the Prodigall : who, *when he came to himself*, that is, when he saw what a wretched and helpless creature he was, *he cast his thoughts upon his Fathers house*, he loathed any longer to feed upon the huskes and hogs meat of the world, then he desires *the bread of his Fathers hired servants* : Nothing but home will content him : farewell feasting and revelling, and all filthy pleasures that I have lived in : I have gotten nothing by them, but wounds, and sorrows, and vexation of Spirit : I will home to my Fathers house : there is bread and durable cloathing : there is whatsoever I can wish or desire : here I starve and die : there I shall live and sweetly enjoy my self : here I want all things ; but there I shall lack nothing. This is a lively pourtraiture of a thirsty and wearied soul flying unto Christ for ease and comfort. This then is one reason why Christ is precious to Believers ; namely, because they are in some measure convinced of their misery with him : and of their
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own impotency and utter inability to help themselves, therefore Christ is precious unto them.

II. *Reas.* Secondly, Believers are not onely convinced of their own misery without Christ, and of their impotency and inability to help themselves: but also they see and apprehend an infinite treasure of good and happiness, that God hath treasured up in Christ; and that to be joyned unto him, is the onely way to obtain these blessings.

Viz. the { Fathers Love.
Pardon of sin.
Manifestation of Gods face.

The love of God being infinite like himself, cannot be conferred upon any creature for its own sake: the *causa procuratrix*, or the procuring cause of this love must of necessity be infinitely meritorious: now this is not found among the sonnes of men, but onely in Christ the eternal Son of God; onely in Christ, who was *θεοῦ υἱός*, God-man, as I may say; *Immanuel*, God with us, or God in our flesh: God, that he might be a fit object for the infinite love of his Father; and man, that he might derive
and

and bring that love to us. God first loves his Son, and then Believers through him. It is impossible that the infinite love of the infinite God should be drawn out, but by an infinite motive : and where is this motive, but in the second person co-eternall, co-essentiall, and co-equall with the Father? were it not for his Son, God should have no object for his love in the world. Love is as fire, which must have fuel to maintain it. Now let all the Creatures, men and Angels be set before God; yet they all with all their excellencies and lovely parts cannot deserve the least minute or tittle of his Love. God loves himself in his Son, and his creatures for his beloved Son's sake. God will supply (saith the Apostle) *all your need according to his riches in Glory by Jesus Christ, Philip. 4. 9.* The treasures of Gods love and riches are first in Christ; and by our union with him we come to enjoy them. So *Ephef. 1. 6. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved ἐν τῷ ἀγαπῶμένῳ, in which he hath ingratiated us through that Beloved.* Gods love and his favour is undeserved in our parts :
we

we find grace in his sight through Christ. Notable to this purpose is the order of the three persons, which the Apostle sets, *Cor.* the last and the last. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.* You must know now, that this is not a right natural order: for by order of nature the Father (whom the Apostle call's God in a personal sense, as *John 1. the word was with God*, that is, with the Father) I say by order of nature the Father is first of himself, not begotten: the Son is from the Father begotten; yet eternal: and the Holy Ghost is proceeding from them both; yet eternally too: for though they be one before another in order of nature; yet not in order of time: But now here is the Question: seeing the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy spirit last in that natural order; why doth the Apostle in the fore-mentioned place set the Son first? verily because he is next and immediate unto us, being our Mediatour; being the *canalis* or conduit pipe (as I may say) by which the love of God, and the communion of the Holy-

Holy-Ghost is brought and conveyed to us; as the meanes is ever before the end. Now the Saints being convinced and perswaded of this Truth, this is the thing, that makes Christ so dear and precious unto them, as he is: if *Isaac* loved *Esau* for his venisons for a carnal respect: much more have we cause to love the Lord Jesus, and highly to esteem of him, having procured for us the love of the Father; a love like *Jonathan's* love to *David*, passing the love of women: yea a love of infinite dimensions and measures, if I may so speak: the breadth of it is infinite; because it is without respect of persons: the length also infinite; because it is from everlasting to everlasting: the depth infinite; because it redeemes and delivers from Hell: and the height likewise infinite; because it lifts us up to Heaven. Certainly Christ having purchased such a wonderfull love, as this; he must needs be precious, he must needs be amiable and lovely to a believing soul.

Secondly, for the pardon of sin there is likewise an absolute necessity of Christ. The blood of Christ onely, and not

not of Bulls and Goats, is availeable to take away sins. The soul being convicted of its sinfulness, speakes as the Prophet doth: *Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* God is devouring fire and everlasting burnings in relation to sinners: his wrath is the fewel of Hell, as I may say: the breath of his indignation is like a river of brimstone kindling and perpetually maintaining the flames of *Tophet*: what shall the poor sinfull soul do now? here's nothing but menaces and threatenings, terrours and amazements: death and destruction: and where is the remedy? verily no where but in Christ alone. *Israel* passing through the wilderness had a cloud to cover him, and defend him from the scorching Sunbeames: now what was this cloud but a type and shadow of Christ, as the Apottle makes it, *1 Cor. 10. 1.* he makes there the cloud, and the Sea, and the Manna, and the water of the Rock to be all figures and Images of Christ. Christ is a sea to wash, Manna to feed, water to refresh, and a cloud to hide the soul from the hot and burning wrath

wrath of God: the fiery beames of that wrath would surely suffocate it and stifle it, were not the blood of Christ interposed and set between to veile it: the blood of Christ obnubilates and covers the soul from the fierce anger of God; it is Christ onely that reconcileth us to God: it is he alone that is our Advocate to plead our cause with his Father: when man had sinned, Justice and Mercy strove one with another, & seemed to be at variance: Christ redintegrates them, and makes them friends again: he is our blessed Umpire to set these two together again; giving satisfaction to Justice, and place to mercy; so honouring and dignifying both; making both to rejoyce, both to kiss and embrace each other. God smells a sweet savour of rest in Christ onely: all the hilasticall and propitiatory sacrifices of the Law did look to him, as to their end and substance: of themselves they could not purge away the guilt of the least sin: the repetition of them (as the Apostle teacheth) shows plainly how invalid they were to expiate the crimes and offences of the soul: the strictest observance of them
could

could not make the worshipper perfect, as touching cleereness of Conscience, *Heb. 9. 9.* When *David* cries, *purge me with hyssope, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow*; he alludes indeed to the Levitical Ceremony: but he aims at the blood of Christ onely: this alone was able to purge away his foul spot: his hainous sin of murder would not out by any other washing then this. In one of the old sacrifices there were two Goats appointed; one to be slain, and the other to be kept alive, which was called the scape-Goat: now both these have an eye to Christ: the slain or sacrificed Goat was a type of his dying for sin: and the surviving or scape-goat figures his rising again and ever living to maintain the worth of that oblation: The Apostle saith, that he ever liveth to make intercession for us: and how doth he make intercession, but by continual holding forth in the presence of his Father the merite of his sufferings? so that still Christ both dying and living is the fountain of our peace, and attonement with God: still Christ is he, and the onely he, that obtaineth remission of sins

sins for us. Now if we consider the many and great benefits that redound to us by the pardon of sin, we must needs conclude that Christ is very precious, by whom we enjoy such a mercy.

When sin is pardoned, there is an end of Gods heavie wrath and displeasure: Satan's Kingdom goes down; the power of our corruptions daily decaying: we have peace and joy within; whereas before we had nothing but raging storms and tempests, and a very hell in our Consciences: our prayers find acceptance at the throne of Grace: all the creatures are in league with us, and are become our faithfull servants: that which comes from them, is sweet and benigne, healthfull and good: our blessings are blessed: yea our very curses (if they may be so called) are likewise blessed unto us: Judgements are removed: every bitternesse is taken away: even the sting of death is puld out: Christ, as a tree of most excellent vertue, is cut down, and thrown into our *Marah*. Some things may work adversely and crossly to us: but the Apostle speaks of a *cooperating, or working together*; which makes amends for all:

The preciousness of Christ

all things work together (saith he) for good unto them that love God, Rom. 8. 28. and they be such, that have their sins pardoned.

Though some things work untowardly, and against the hair, as I may say; yet take them altogether, and there is a blessed harmony and compliance, a sweet relishableness and savouriness in them: one thing doth recompence and make up another: the mixture of sweet and sowre through the wisdom and mighty working of God is very demulcent and wholsome, full of benediction and blessedness; that even the sins of the Godly are an advantage to them, and turn to their melioration and betterment: God makes use even of them to do his children good: he brings *meat out of the very eater*; and converts the causes of damnation into furtherances of salvation. Add hereunto, that adoption, communion with God, and with his Saints, and assurance of eternal glory are all of them the blessed concomitants of sin pardoned. We recover the Image of God, and in some measure the freedom of our wills unto good, when
our

our Consciences are washed, and our sins pardoned. We have a continual feast in our souls, and songs in the very night of affliction, when our sins are pardoned. We are freed from the spirit of bondage, our hearts are strong, we are as bold as Lyons, and desire nothing more then the presence and coming of the Judge, when our sins are pardoned. Oh what a confluence of all blessedness and happiness is there in Jesus Christ! if we have him, we are rich, we are full, we have all: if we be without him, all that we have, how excellent soever it be, is as nothing: we are miserable, wretched, lost, and the very worst of creatures: all the maledictions and curses of God lie upon us, and death, when it comes, will gnaw upon us everlastingly. Certainly Christ, must needs be exceeding precious, with whom we enjoy such a world of blessings; and without whom we are so extreamely unhappy. The Lord give us to know the things, that belong unto our peace. Christ procures for us the pardon of sins; and the pardon of sins is not a solitary blessing; it comes not alone; but with a long train of

good things at the heeles of it : Christ therefore, that obtaines it, must needs be precious and excellent in the highest degree.

Thirdly it is Christ alone, that doth as it were unmask and unvaile the face of God ; and help us to such a manifestation and sight of it, as our nature is capable of : his glory in the absolute-ness and perfection of it no creature can behold. When Job had set forth the greatness of Gods wisdom and power expressed in his marvellous workes ; he concludes thus ; *Loe, these are part of his wayes ; but how little a portion is heard of him ? but the thunder of his power who can understand ? Job 26. last verse* : now that thunder of Gods power is the highest degree of it : the Apostle expounds it, when he saith, *that God is able to do above all that we can either ask, or think* : we can ask much ; and we can think more : yet we can neither ask, nor think so much as God can doe : here's the thunder of his power, Zophar also saith, *that we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection* : he compares it in height to Heaven, in depth to Hell, in length to the Earth,

and

and in breadth to the Sea: yea he makes it higher, deeper, longer and broader, then all these. And God himself tells *Moses*, that no man can see his face, and live. We may see *Jehovah's* back-parts: but his face, that is, his absoluteness, and perfection cannot be seen: and therefore he is called the *invisible God*. Yet howsoever this doth not a little set forth the excellency and worthiness of Christ: that Revelation, which we have of God, we have it by him: and hereof we may see a notable figure in *Moses*. The Lord proclaimed his mercy, his patience, his goodness, his Truth, and his justice before him: these are his back-parts; and more then these he could not see: and therefore it is said, that *the Lord covered Moses with his hand, while he passed by*. But to come now to the point: where was *Moses*, when he had this vision and appearance of the Deity? he was in a cleft of the Rock: now verily that Rock was a shadow of Christ: we see the glory of God through him. *per speculum*, as it were in a glass. Christ is the *lively Image of God*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. He is the *brightness of his glory*, and the *express character of his*

his person, Heb. 1. 3. There is no excellency in the Father, which is not compleate in the Son: and by the Son we come to know it: so saith the Apostle. God, who hath commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the Light of the Knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. both this expression, and that in the *Hebrewes* before-mentioned, where Christ is called the *brightness of Gods glory*, are a metaphor taken from the beames of the Sun. As the Sun is manifested by his own brightness, viz. by his beames; for we cannot see the Sun in *Rota*, in his Charrer, or circumvolution, but by his beames: so the inaccessible Light of his Fathers glory is revealed *tantum per radios ac splendorem*, as it were by beames and brightness shining most clearly in Christ: and the root and Fountain of that brightness is in Christ's God-head, but darted upon us through the manhood: according to that testimony, Job. 1. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him.* The bosome

some is the place and seat of secrets :
now it is Christ onely that opens the
bosome, declares the secrets, and re-
veales the glory and brightness of
Gods face unto Believers : therefore
he must needs be exceeding preci-
ous.

Thirdly, if we consider Christ in III. Reas.
all his relations : either as he is man,
or as he is Mediator, or as he is God,
we shall find him in all these to be most
precious and excellent.

First of all as Man ; *he was holy, and
harmeless, and separate from sinners ; Heb.
7. 26. a Lamb without blemish, and
without spot, 1 Peter 1. 19.* The Apostle
relates to the Paschall Lamb, which
was to be so conditioned : it was be-
hoofefull, that Christ should not one-
ly be man ; but also a man perfectly
holy and righteous ; else he could
not have been a competent and fitting
Saviour : yea, he had been so far from
satisfying for the sins of others, that
he must have dyed for his own. And
besides it was requisite that there should
be that beautifull analogy and propor-
tion between him that lost all, and him
that recover'd all ; that as *Adam*, who
E 4 plaid

plaid the Bank-rupt, was perfect; so should the Redeemer be. Christ indeed in a certain place doth turn off from himself the appellation of good in a sense of perfection. One called him *good Master*: but he replied, *why callest thou me good? there is none good but God, Matth. 19. 16, 17.* But why doth Christ do so? was not he perfectly good? yes: but the other was not ware of his God-head, when he call'd him so: he looked upon Christ (saith *Chrysostome*) ὡς ἀνθρώπου ἡλιθίου, as upon a meere naked, extenuated, debased man: and yet he attributes unto him a more then humane goodness and perfection; according to the errour of the *Pharisees*, whose Disciple, no doubt he was. The *Pharisees* held, that even men by a strict observance of the Law might attain to perfection of Righteousness and sanctimony in this life: and such a thought, no question, had this Schollar of theirs concerning Christ: so that if we look well upon it, we shall see, that our Saviour doth not deny himself to be perfectly good: but onely he checks the pharisaicall opinion of perfection in those, that are no more then men.

Christ

Christ was more then a meere man : if the young man had knowne so much : he should not have been reprov'd for calling him *good* in a sense of absolute-ness and perfection : such an Epithite was rightly applyable unto Christ, had the young *Pharisee* been ware of his De-ity : or had he known the strange manner of his conception, viz. by the Holy Ghost ; he might have said of him, as the *Psalmist* doth ; *thou art fairer then the children of men* : and so the title of *good Master* would never have been ex-cepted against.

Secondly, Christ as man also was abased : and yet in his abasement he was very excellent : it is a very comely sight to see a great Personage of a meek, humble and lowly carriage, willing to stoop, and to come down from his height ; so it be not in a sordid and un-fitting way. Now so it was with Christ : he washed the very feet of his Disciples : he became poore to make us rich : he fasted, that we might feast : he went on foot, that we might ride, as I may say : he died, that we might live. The Apostle saith, that though he was in the form of God, *and thought it no rob-bery*

bery or Sacriledge to be equall with God : yet he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, Philip. 2. 6, 7, 8. Now mark, I pray, the antithetis or opposi- tion, which these words hold forth.

Christ was from all eternity ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ in the * essentiall form of God ; or in the glorious nature and condition of God : yet he took upon μορφὴν δούλου the state, being and condition of a servant. He was equall with God, called therefore the mighty God, and the everlasting Father, Esa. 9. 6. and ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς the very, or the true God, 1 John 5. 20. yet he was content to be found ἐν ὁμοιω- ματι ἢ σχήματι ἀνθρώπων, in the similitude and shape of men, that this is in the very rank, nature and quality of men, subject to mans passions, and every way a right man, sin onely excepted, where- of you heard before. Again, he thought it no rapine or robbery to be equall with God : yet he suffered himself to be de- nuded and rob'd of his glory by sinfull men.

μορφον,
properly
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ward
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or figure of
a thing,
which be-
cause God
hath not,
therefore
here it is
put for
the Divine
Essence.

men. God call's him *the man, that is his fellow*, Zach. 13. 7. and yet he was made a fellow to thieves and malefactors: yea he was made inferiour and underling to base men, a very murderer being preferred before him. Though he was full of glory and excellency: yet he did empty himself of all: for so are the words of the Apostle, *ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε*, he evacuated or emptied himself that is, he reduced himself, as it were to nothing; or (as the Father hath it) *he exhausted himself*; he drew himself dry. Lastly, though he was the Prince and Lord of life: yet *he humbled himself unto Death*: and the basest death of all, *the death of the Cross*: it was a Roman kind of execution, and asserted even by a Roman Oratour, to be of all other most ignominious and shamefull. *Civem Romanum scelus est verberare prope paricidium necare: quid dicam in crucem tollere?* said that Oratour. It is a hainous wickedness to beat a Roman: it is almost paracide to kill him: what is it then to crucifie him? how beyond measure hainous is that? yet thus low was the Son of God brought. And it addes likewise to the measure of his humility

humility and lowliness, that he was voluntary in all his debasement: he was not forced or compelled to it: *no man taketh my life from me* (saith he) *but I lay it down of my self*, Joh. 10. 18. and what he saith of his life, is true also of all his Divine glory: it was not violently snatch't from him whither he would, or no: but he did willingly, cheerfully, spontaneously and of his own accord develt and strip himself of it. Now certainly thus to descend from Heaven to Earth, from Divinity to humanity, from a Kingdome to a slavery, from life to death, and all this of his own free and willing disposition without any compulsion or enforcement; this addes no little grace and luster to him. 'Tis a very seemly sight to see a venerable person condescending, stooping low, and denying himself; to see a King casting aside his Robes of Majesty, and descending to a lower pitch for the doing of some good, which otherwise cannot be atcheived: we had been eternally lost, if the Son of God had not done thus: unless he had humbled himself, we could never have been exalted.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Christ as man was obedient unto the will of his Father : he was universally and constantly obedient : he was obedient without any the least reluctance, grudging, or unwillingness. To this purpose makes that of the most excellent song, where it is said of Christ, that *he cometh leaping upon the Mountains, and skipping upon the hills,* Cantic. 2. 8. there were great Mountains of difficulties and hardship in the way of our Redemption; yet he past lightly and cheerfully over them all to do the will of him that sent him. Yea, he was so far from grumbling and murmuring, that it was even meat and drink to him to do that will; and he was straitned and pained in his mind till the bloody baptisme of his suffering was accomplished, *Luke 12. 50. It is written of him in the rowle of Gods book; Loe, I come to do thy will, o God*; those words, *Loe, I come*; shew his alacrity and cheerfulness, his readines and forwardness to do his Fathers will; his loyns were alwayes girded, and his feet shodde unto it. The Spirit of Christ dwelling in the Saints makes them to be prompt and ready unto all duties,
and

and works commanded of God : how much more then was Christ himself so, in whom the Spirit of God was, as water in the Fountain ? when he conquered death, and the grave, and all the powers of darkness for us, Repentance was hid from his eyes, : he shrank not, nor drew away the shoulder from it. Three times he was under such an infinite pressure of Divine wrath, as had been enough to have crushed ten thousand worlds, yet he flinched not ; but drank the bitter cup off to the very bottome : he patiently *endured the Cross, and despised the shame.* Indeed it cannot be denied, that when he was in his agony, he prayed to his Father to save him from that hour ; and thrice he prayed, that the bitter cup might pass from him : yet he did not this through disobedience or unwillingness to undergoe the task, that his Father had set him to : but first of all we must know that his mind was so stricken with the infinite wrath of God, with which he was then conflicting ; so astonished and overwhelmed with that insupportable pressure ; that all the powers and faculties of his soul were for a while

while interrupted, suspended, confounded: so that he knew not well what to say, or whether to turn himself: this appears by his words, *Joh. 12. 27. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?*

Secondly when he prayed so, we must conceive, that as a man subject to frailties like us (yet without sin) he thought he had been utterly lost and undone, if his Father should not deliver him from that hour, and excuse him from drinking of the cup. His sense of dolour was so vehement, and he so amazed with it; that it wrung from him a signification of Natures fears and reluctance: yet all the while his holy, his pure, and unblemished mind was thoroughly bent, and resolved to go through stich with the work, whatsoever came of it.

Thirdly, we see, that when he prayed, *Father save me from this hour*, he presently and immediately subjoyns: *but for this cause came I unto this hour: Father glorifie thy name*: likewise when he prayed, that the Cup might pass from him: he desires it no otherwise, then with condition of his Fathers will. Al-
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So in that ruefull vociferation and crying out, *why hast thou forsaken me?* we see that he did not let go his hold; but remembred to say, *my God, my God*: so that here was no diffidence, no sin, no disobedience all this while.

Lastly, all this was so carried, and punctually related by the *Evangelists* to shew us these things, viz.

1. The exceeding atrocity and hainousness of sin.

2. A mirrour of Gods infinite mercy in Christ,

3. Our Nature really and truly suffering in him.

4. The fulness of his expiation and satisfaction.

5. The certainty of his Fathers goodwill towards us; whereof we are the less to doubt, by how much the more we see that the eternal Son was humbled and made an object for our sakes.

Fourthly, Christ as a man likewise was perfect in all graces. The Prophet tells that there should come a *Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots*; and the Spirit of the Lord was to rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom, and understanding;

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excelling *Adam* : for *Adam* was set in a mutable condition : but Christ is steadfast, and abiding for ever ; confirmed in grace like the Holy Angels of God : *Yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever.* In respect of vertue and the Faith of Believers even his manhood, before it was in being, was cloathed with perfection of grace, and so continueth for ever. Again, *Adam* was a meer man and alone by himself : but in Christ the humane nature was *hypostatically* united unto the Divine : and hence it comes to pass, that Christ, even as man, had a greater measure of knowledge and Revelations of grace and heavenly gifts, then ever *Adam* had. The Apostle saith, *that in Christ dwells all the fulness of the God-head* *οικουμένης*, *bodily*, *Col. 2.9.* that is, not by a naked and bare communicating of vertue, as God is said to dwell in his Saints ; but by a substantiall union of the two Natures, Divine and humane, the eternal Word and the Man, consisting of soul and body, whereby they become one *ὁμοῦς*, one Person, or subsistence. Now from this admirable and wonderfull union of the two Natures in Christ, there flowes un-
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to the Manhood a plenitude and fullness of all Spiritual wisdom and grace, such as was never found in any meer man; no not in *Adam*, while he stood in his integrity and uprightness.

Now then to draw to a conclusion of this head. If Christ even according to his humanity were perfectly innocent and holy: if he were in his divine celsitude and highness voluntarily debased: if he were exactly obedient in all things to his Fathers commands: and if he were compleat in all heavenly wisdom and graces: then certainly even as he was man, he was of all other most precious, most lovely and desirable.

Add hereunto, that *his flesh never saw corruption*; that it rose again from the grave, it being impossible for the bands of death to detain it. Also as man he came of the race of Kings. As man he shall judge the world, *Acts* 17. 31. As man he was wonderfully born of a Virgin; called therefore by a peculiar name, *Shiloh*, which signifieth a *Secundine*, or *after-birth*, *Genes.* 49. 19. the word comes of *שלוו* which signifies *tranquillam esse*; intimating that Christ

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is he, who hath brought us peace and tranquility : and that he might be our Peace-maker ; it was necessary that he should be *Shiloh* , born of the sanctified seed of a woman, without the seed of a man. The Apostle expounds the name, *Galat. 4. 4.* where he saith of Christ, that he was made of a woman : not of a man and a woman both ; but of a woman alone without a man.

Again, Christ as man was foretold by the Prophets, and by sundry types ; attended upon at his birth by holy Angels : a peculiar Star created for him. Christ as man was in one *hypostasis*, or person with God, called therefore *Ichiel*, *Proverb. 30. 1.* a word (as *Janinus* writes) compounded of three parts ; as if one should say ; *the strong God with me* : the name comes to all one with *Immanuel* ; and the Apostle expounds both, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* where he saith of Christ, *that he was God manifest in the flesh* : and this he affirmeth also to be *without controversie a great Mystery*, and a *Mystery of godliness* : In every Art and profession there is a *Mystery* : but this holds forth a *Mystery of Godliness* : for he that was *Ichiel*, God present in the flesh to every faithfull

faithfull and believing soul, was likewise *Ucal*, Almighty, able for all things: so that by these two names the faithfull are assured of their Justification, Sanctification, and eternal Salvation through the presence and power of God: and this doubtless is μέγα μυστήριον, *a great Mystery.*

Further, *more* Christ as man was our Sacrifice and expiation: he was our ἀντίλυτρον, *the price of our Redemption*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. though I confess that this price had its worth from the union of the two natures. Again, Christ as man was conceived of the Holy Ghost: Christ as man is ascended into Heaven; Christ as man sits at the right hand of God. Now all these things, and much more that might be brought, do speak Christ a very precious and excellent person, and that even according to his manhood.

Secondly, consider Christ as Mediator, and there also he shines forth most gloriously, and appears to be the most peereless and precious thing in the world.

In the Mediatorship of Christ we are to consider his Τριτόνιον, or his

The preciousness of Christ
 three-fold Holy Office of
 } Prophecie.
 } Priesthood.
 } Kingdome.

Christ is a Prophet καὶ ἐξου, in way of eminency and excellency above all other Prophets: he was the Head of them all; and that in these respects.

First, of all, other Prophets were but Types and shadows of this great Prophet: even Moses himself was but a figure of him: *a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren like unto me saith Moses, Acts 7. 37,* those words, *like unto me,* do plainly shew, that Moses was at the best but an Image and shadow of Christ.

Moses fasted forty dayes before the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai; so did Christ before he began to preach the Gospel.

God did more clearly and perspicuously manifest himself unto Moses then unto other men: it is said, *that he spake unto him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, Exod 33. 11.* so did the Eternal Father more openly reveal himself unto Christ, then unto any creature: *no man knoweth the Father save the Son,*

Say, and he to whomsoever the Son will
reueale him, Matt. 11. 27.

Moses became a Shepherd in the Land
of Midian: so is Christ the Shepheard
an overseer of our souls. 1 Peter 2. 25.

Moses was faithfull in all Gods house
and so was Christ, but yet in a far
more excellent manner then Moses, as
the Apostle declares, Heb. 3. Moses was
faithfull as a servant, Christ as a son over
his own house.

Moses was himself a part of that
house: but Christ was the builder of it.

Moses under God did institute sacra-
ments, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. It is said, that
the Fathers passed under the cloud, and
through the Sea, and were all baptised into
Moses in the cloud, and in the Sea: mark
that phrase, unto Moses: they were bap-
tised unto him, as unto the type, or de-
puty of Christ: for Baptisme is a Sa-
crament of the New Testament, and
properly of Christs Institution.

Moses also instituted the Pasceover:
so did Christ the Lords Supper.

As the Law was exhibited by Moses
so was the Gospel, which brings grace
and truth, free Redemption, and the
accomplishment of all types unto Belie-

vers, exalted by Christ, Job. 17. Thus you see, that *Moses*, that *egregious* and *eximius* Prophet was no more then a shadow of Christ. And the like may be said of all the rest of the Prophets: it were no hard matter to shew how they did all of them in one thing, or other resemble Christ, just as the lively picture of a man doth his person: as *Enoch* and *Elijah* in their Translations resembled the ascension of Christ.

Noah by his righteousness saving all the rest that went into the Ark with him, shadowed Christ, who by his perfect obedience, saves all true Believers. Concerning the Prophet *David* it is said, that even those which sate at his Table rose up against him, *Psal. 41. 9.* so did *Judas* against Christ, who dipp'd with him in the platter. *David* also was a man after Gods own heart: so was Christ without the least flaw or failing; and what an evident type of Christ was the Prophet *Elisha*, when a dead body rose again being cast into his grave, and touching his bones? *2 Kings 13. 21.* This was not done by any Native or inherent virtue of the Prophet: but by that accident to foreinstruct the faithfull concerning the

the vertue of Christ flesh, which rising from the dead, should likewise raise up our perished bodies, according to that, *Esa. 26. 19. thy dead men shall live: together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing yee that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of berbs, and the Earth shall cast out the dead.* Again, *Jonah* lying three dayes and three nights in the belly of a fish, was a sign of Christ lying so long in the grave. The Prophets were all of them types and resemblances of Christ: even *John* the Baptist, then whom there arose not a greater Prophet of all those that are born of women, even he, I say, was but Christs harbinger or fore-runner. Now then as substances do far excell shadows, and Kings their *Ante-ambulators* or harbingers: so doth Christ far excell all Prophets: they all of them were but shadows and fore-runners to him.

Secondly, other Prophets could speak only in the ears of men: but Christ spake and still speaks to the heart: *he hath the Key of David; he openeth, and no man shutteth; he shutteth and no man openeth, Rev. 3. 7.* it is a similitude taken from them, that keep the Keys of a City, or Castle,

file, without which they can neither be opened, nor shut: no more can any open the heart or break in upon the Spirit, beside Christ: he alone is able to open the eyes of the mind, and to convince the Conscience, by the secret, kindly and powerfull working of his own Spirit.

Other Prophets can preach wisdom unto men: but Christ can preach them wise: other Prophets can warn men by telling them of their sins, and denouncing the Judgments of God: but Christ can reclaim them, and turn them from their sins: *the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and live, Joh. 5. 25.* and hence it is said, that he taught, *as one having Authority, and not as the Scribes:* he came coldly and driely from them: but full of pangs and boldness, full of conviction, and reproof, full of the evident demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, as the Apostle speaks: in this manner came the word from Christ.

Thirdly, other Prophets were instrumental to search out the mind of God: and they did it by way of a secret, the Divine will being revealed and discovered

red unto them, but the mind of God was in Christ habitually and radically: the fountain and root, the source and principall cause of Christ's Prophecie was in himself. Before all time Christ had the honour to sit in the seat of most excellent secrets; *the bosom of the Father*: and therefore he is able, as from himself to reveal all the Oracles and secrets of God needfull to be known: he is able to reveal them when, and how, and to whom he pleaseth.

Now that these things are habitually in Christ, as heat in fire, or water in a living and ever flowing spring, appears by this.

1, That Christ is essentially wisdom and understanding: *Counsell is mine, and sound wisdom* (saith he) *I am understanding*, Prov. 8. 14.

2. It appears also by this, because he counsels us to buy eye salve of him, that we may see; and because he hath power to send the Spirit; yet have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things saith the Apostle, 1 Joh. 2. 20. Christ is the holy one from whom we receive the anoynting of the Spirit, opening our eyes and discovering unto us
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all saving truths. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, *Colossians 2.3*. They are hid in him, as Gold, and Silver are *in suo loco*, as the Philosopher speaks, hid in the veins of the Earth: that's another Argument of the habitualness of Prophecie in Christ.

Thirdly, and another is this, that *all fulness* is said to dwell in him, *Coloss. 1. 19*. whereby the terme of plenitude, or fulness Mr. Beza understands the accumulation, or heaping up of all divine gifts in a most copious and plentiful manner, which he saith, that the Schoolmen do call habitual grace, distinct from the grace of union; the union (he means) of the two natures. Now one part of this habitual grace and fulness in Christ, is the gift of Prophecie: and mark I pray; it is said *κατοικῶσαι, to inhabit or dwell in Christ*: this implieth the habitualness of it.

Fourthly, other Prophets could reveal but some part of the will of God, and at some times onely, *Heb. 1. 1. that God spake unto the Fathers by the Prophets at sundry times, and in divers manners*; that is he did let out his Light *minutim,*

rime, by little, and little, till the day-
 Star and Sun of Righteousness a-
 rose: but (saith the Apostle) *in these*
last dayes he hath spoken by his Son, ver. 2.
 that is, he hath spoken more fully and
 plainly. The antithesis or opposition
 which the Apostle sets between Gods
 speaking by the Prophets of old, and
 by his Son in his latter age of the
 world, shews plainly the dimness and
 darkness of these former ages in com-
 parison of those, which have been since
 the coming of Christ: in this respect
 the Apostle saith, that the heirs of life
 and salvation were but *children* before
 Christ's incarnation. *Galat. 4. 1, 2, &c.*
 for the generality of them they knew
 but as Children, for what we have done
 since, besides other points of minority
 and non-age touching Legality and Ce-
 remonies, which the Apostle in that
 place terms elements or rudiments of
 the world; and the State of the Saints
 under them a state of bondage; as we
 see now but δι' ὀφθαλμοῦ ἐν ἀνίμῳ, *through a glass darkly*, for what we shall
 do in the life to come: all is wrapt up
 in a riddle now, for what it will be
 then: so did they of old in comparison
 of

of us: their Light was but an obscure and glimmering light to ours. Christ hath flowed in upon his people in greater abundance of Revelation since his coming, then before: His discovery of himself then was but *a standing behind the wall, a looking forth of the window, a shewing himself through the Lattice*, Cant: 2. 9.

Fifthly, other Prophets might not preach themselves: the Apostle inveighs against self-commenders, 2 Cor. 10. 12. *we dare not (saith he) make our selves of the number, or compare our selves with some that commend themselves*: and in another place he speaks out plainly: *no man (saith he) liveth to himself*, Rom. 14. 7. that is, none ought to live unto himself. Yea, even Christ himself relating to himself as a meer man, saith, *that his witness is not true, if he bear witness of himself*; Joh. 5. 31. but in another place relating to himself a Mediatour, as God and man in one person, and one with the Father, he speaks clean contrary to this: *though I do bear record of myself (saith he) yet my record is true*, Joh. 8. 14. Here then is a wide difference between other Prophets in respect
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of their Office, and Christ: they might not preach themselves: they did indeed report something of their own vertues, but it was for holy example and instructions sake; and it was still with reference unto the main object of the word which was Christ. But now Christ being our Mediatour, or great Prophet, the *Apostle of our Profession*, and the *Angel or Messenger of the Covenant* between God and us, he may and doth preach himself: to him give all the Prophets witness, *Acts 10. 43.* and he bears witness of himself, because he hath not a greater in the point of our Justification, Sanctification, and eternal Salvation to bear witness of, than himself: and hence are those self-predications of his, which we find in the Scriptures. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the Earth. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden.* When he read that place of the Prophet *Isaiah, chap. 61. 1. &c.* he told the people, *this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.* When the excommunicated man asked him who the Son of God was? he answered him, *thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee:* and he told

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told the Samaritanes plainly, that he was the *Messias*. And it is said of the two Disciples, *that beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*. Now surely it commends unto us the Prophecie of Christ, that he might preach & commend himself without any blot of arrogancie, or taking too much upon him: this argues him to be a high and honourable Prophet above all other.

Sixthly, all the Prophets had their Commission and Authority from him: *the words of the wise are as Goats and as nails fastned by the Masters of Assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd, saith Solomon, Eccles. 12. 11. the words of the wise are Divine and heavenly instructions: the Masters of Assemblies are Gospel-Ministers and Teachers: and Christ is that one Shepherd from whom those words are given, and from whom those Masters have their Authority. Hence it is said, that he went by the Spirit, that is, by his Divine vertue and power, and preached unto those Spirits, that are now in prison (in Hell we must conceive) having been disobedient unto the word*

word of God, and despised his long-suffering in the dayes of Noah, while the Ark was preparing, 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. here we see, that that, which Noah a Preacher of righteousness did, is attributed unto Christ: because Noah was but instrumental, and had his Commission from him; just as it is said, that whatsoever the Prisoners did in the prison, Joseph was the doer of it, Genes. 39. 22. because they did it by warrant and leave from him; or by his dictation and Commandement.

Again, observe that phrase, *Ezek. 20. 46. drop thy word toward the South*; and the like speech is that of *Moses*; *my Doctrine shall drop as the rain; my words shall distill as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showres upon the grass.* Now from this phrase of dropping, we may draw an Argument, that Christ is the head of all true Prophets and Teachers. For look as the clouds, from whence the rain descends, have not their water originally and natively in themselves; but from the Sea and moistned places of the Earth exhal'd and drawn up by the heat of the Sun: so have not the

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Prophets

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Prophets a Spirit of Propheſie; nor any Divine Teachers a faculty of teaching Heavenly and ſaving Truths of themſelves: but it is drawn up out of Chriſt, as out of a full Sea of all excellent wiſdome and knowledge, and conveyed into them by the heat and vigour, not of their own Spirit, but a far higher Spirit then theirs, *viz.* the ſpirit of Chriſt.

Neither may other Prophets go of their own heads, but by Commiſſion and delegation from him. And therefore they have the name of *Ambaſſadors* given them, *2 Cor. 5. 20. Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, Chriſt it is, that ſaid, *go and teach all nations*. Chriſt it is, that inſtituted the Miniſtry of the word. Chriſt it is that gave ſome to be *Apoſtles*, and ſome *Prophets*, and ſome *Evangelists* and ſome *Paſtors and Teachers*, *Ephes. 4. 11.* and hence are thoſe ſpeeches ſo frequent in the Old Teſtament: *hear the word of the Lord, the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it: the word of the Lord came unto me*, and the like: in which places the original for the Lord is *Jehovah*, and by *Jehovah* is meant the ſecond perſon, to wit, the Lord Jeſus, the whole adminiſtration of things for the good of the Church

Church being committed unto him :
 and hither tends that remarkable pas-
 sage, 1 Sam. 3. 21. *The Lord revealed
 himself unto Samuel in Shiloh by the
 word of the Lord*; that is, by Jesus Christ; *Junius in*
 who in the preceding books of the *Loc.*
 Scripture (as *Junius* notes) was wont
 to be called *the Angel of the Lord*: and
 afterward, as he revealed himself
 more cleerly, he was called *the word of
 the Lord*. But besides the opinion of *Junius*,
 another place of Scripture doth
 confirm this interpretation: the place
 is Genes. 19. 24. *The Lord rained upon
 Sodome and Gomorrah brimstone and fire
 from the Lord out of Heaven*. From this
 Scripture I gather thus, much: that as
 the second person is brought forth act-
 ing by a way of mediation from the first,
 in point of Rule and Kingdome here:
 so in that place of *Samuel* he is brought
 forth acting from him mediately in point
 of Prophecie: although I confess that
 considered according to his God-head,
 he did both execute Judgments upon the
Sodomites, and reveal himself unto *Samuel*
 immediately from himself, without
 any such dependence or subordination.

Thus you see, that Christ is the head

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and principal of all Prophets being in sundry respects the most excellent this way of all other.

Secondly, consider Christ as a Priest, and here also we shall find him to be most precious and excellent: here is the very heart and strength of all his mediation between God and us; indeed in respect of our necessity, who must first know our own misery and the remedy, before we can apply the sacrifice of Christ, and so be reduced to holy obedience and subjection to the Kingdome of God; Prophecie hath the first place in the mediation of Christ; after which follows Priesthood, and last of all royalty or government.

But forasmuch as the priestly Office consisteth mainly in suffering of death; whereunto we were obnoxious and liable for sin, and could not be delivered without it: it plainly appears, that this Office hath the prehemynence and upper hand, and that it doth promerit (as I may say) and buy out the other two. The Prophecie of Christ could never have opened our eyes; neither could his Kingdome have ruled and swayed our hearts, unless by his Priesthood

Priesthood he had dyed for us. *I have manifested thy name unto the men (saith our Saviour) which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word, Joh. 17. 6.* Here we see are some that have the name of God, that is, the Salvation of God manifested unto them: so that Christ becomes a Prophet to to them to enlighten their eyes: they be such also, as are subject and obedient to the Kingdom of Christ; and therefore they are said to keep Gods word: but now who be these that are partakers of such graces and choyce blessings, illumination and Sanctification? verily they be such as God gave unto his Son out of the world, as that Scripture speaks. Now I must tell you that this gift of God is free and properly so called, if we respect the love of God, and our selves that partake it. But if we respect Christ the Mediatour, so it is improperly called a gift: for God gave his Elect unto Christ conditionally for a price, the price of his Life-bloud. and hence the Mystery of our Redemption is called a Covenant. It is indeed a Covenant of Grace in respect of

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God, who was pleased of his own accord to find out such a remedy for miserable man, and to yield to it: and also in respect of true believers, who enjoy the benefit of: but yet in respect of Christ the Mediatour, it is a Covenant made upon termes and conditions, to wit, his passion, his Righteousness.

The Priesthood then of Christ is the most noble part of all his Mediation: without this his Prophecie and Kingdome could never take hold of us, never doe us any good: they whom God gives unto his Son out of the world upon Covenant, upon tearmes of his suffering and dying; they onely have the name of his salvation manifested unto them, and they onely keep his word: all others how neer soever they may seem to be unto the Kingdome of God, and to the mark of salvation; yet they fall short of it. In the Priesthood then of Christ, & in that especially lies the latitude and longitude, the profundity and sublimity of Gods love toward us: and in respect of this especially is the whole Mytery of our redemption by Christ called * *magnalia Dei*,

Dei, the magnificent works of God,
Acts 2. 11.

But now further to set forth the eminency and dignity of Christ's Priesthood, add his exceeding preciousness thereby, let us make a collation and comparison between him and the Levitical Priests, those of *Aaron's* order.

First of all in the Levitical Priesthood there was a plurality of Priests; as in *Matth. 12. 4.* it is said, that it was lawfull for the Priests onely to eat of the shew-bread; and in the fifth verse, that the Priests of the Temple do profane the Sabbath, and are blameless: though there were but one High-Priest: yet there were many inferiour sacrificing Priests at once, *Heb. 9. 6.* But now Christ was a Priest alone: he by himself alone hath appeared to take away sin: he hath by himself purged our sins, *Heb. 1. 3.* his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, *1 Pet. 2. 24.* and hence it is, that he cries out in the Prophet; I, even I am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.

Secondly, in the Levitical Priesthood there was a change, a succession and a moveableness, and hence it came to

pass, that there were many Priests ; because (saith the Apostle) they were not suffered to continue by reason of death, Heb. 7. 23. But now Christ is for ever after the order of Melchisedec : which Melchisedec was without Father, without Mother, without beginning of life, or end of dayes Heb. 7. 3. that is, his Priesthood came not by Father, or Mother, or kindred, as that of the Tribe of Levi did : the Levitical Priests had their Priesthood by generation, by succession from Father to son ; it was hereditary to them ; neither might they be put aside it, except it were for some natural blemish, as blindness, lameness, crookedness, and the like, Levit. 21. 17, 18. &c. But Melchisedec's Priesthood was not after this manner : his was not by natural descent : but it was instituted and given him of God at a time never mentioned in the Scripture : neither is the expiration or ending thereof there spoken of ; that so he might be an apt resemblance and figure of the everlasting Priesthood of Christ ; who hath (as the Apostle teacheth) ἱερωσύνην ἀπαράβατον, an impassable Priesthood ; a Priesthood that cannot pass, or be translated

ted from him to another, *Heb. 7. 24.* in the priesthood of *Aaron's* order every Priest bare office but for their own time: and they were subject to be put out for misdemeanor, as we see in *Abiathar*, *1 King. 2. 26.* yea, and the whole order was dissolved at the death of Christ. But Christ himself is a Priest for ever: he ever liveth to make intercession for us: his priesthood continueth unto the end of the world; yea and the vertue of it infinitely beyond all time: therefore he will have no successour, or Vicar, Christs Priesthood like *Melchisedec's* came neither by Father or Mother, as you heard: for he was of the Tribe of *Judah*, of which (the Apostle saith) there is no mention made as touching priesthood, save onely that a King of *Judah* did once to his cost usurpe that Office; and again, as we read not of the moments of *Melchisedec's* either inauguration or ceasing; so was Christ ever from the beginning of the world a Priest, and ever shall be to the end, yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever.

Thirdly, the Levitical priests offered daily offerings oftentimes: *the Priests went alwayes into the first Tabernacle, accomplishing*

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completing the service of God, Heb. 9. 6. and the High-Priest entered into the holy place, viz. the inmost Tabernacle every Year with blood, ver. 25.

But Christ offered but one sacrifice once for ever: *once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, saith the Apostle, *ver. 26.* and he doth illustrate this Truth by a simile, and confirm it by an Argument. His simile is in those words: *as it is appointed unto men once to die; but after this is the Judgement: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation, Heb. 9. 27, 28.* the explication or unfolding of this similitude take thus: as there is nothing interposed between the death of a man, and his eternal doom, or Judgement: nothing can either mar, or mend his estate: but as the tree falleth, so it shall lie, whether toward the North, or toward the South, toward Heaven, or toward Hell: so between the death of Christ and his second coming, there is no hilactical or expiatory sacrifice interjected, either to add perfection to the

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the first; or to ransom those that had contemned it: and to this looks that Scripture, where it is said, *if we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*, *Hebrewes 10. 26.* there is not a second propitiatory sacrifice to be expected: Christ shall appear the second time without sin, that is, without sacrifices for sin. Men must lay hold of that one once offered, and not despise it, not seem to embrace it, and afterward cast it away: for if they do, there will never come a second to expiate such an offence.

The Argument, which the Apostle useth to prove that Christs sacrifice is but one, and once offered, is taken from the perfection thereof; wherein it differs much from the sacrifices of the Law: for *they could not make the comers unto them perfect*, *Heb. 10. 1.* but there was in them an anniversary or yearly remembrance of sins: yea there was a daily repetition of some of those sacrifices, as the Apostle mindeth, *Heb. 10. 11.* so that here was no perfection: the Conscience of the worshippers might remain

remain for ever unclean, for any thing that these sacrifices could do to purge them. But the single and one sacrifice of Christ, whereby he offered up himself a *Lamb without spot unto God*, is of sufficiency and perfectly able to do away the sins of all the elect in all ages and times of the world, both before and after conversion.

Fourthly, other priests and their sacrifices were but types and shadows of good things to come, *Heb. 10. 1.* and so likewise was the Tabernacle, and all the utensils thereof, in and by which they officiated, *chap. 9. 9.* But now Christ

* *Ita inter-*
pretandum
est voca-
bulum,
ἱερὸν
Heb. 10. 1.

is the very * essentiall form, or the lively and substantiall representation of those things, which were shadowed in the Law; and the Tabernacle, in which he offered, *not made with hands*, as the other was, *Heb. 9. 11.* for that other was a figure for the time present, as the Apostle saith: but the person of Christ, God and man, is the very substance and thing it self, figured by that resemblance. The Ceremoniall Law was given by Moses: but grace and Truth, the full accomplishment of all those Mystical and shadowish services, came by Je-
sus

Jesus Christ, John. 1. 17. the dispensation of life and righteousness, Christ alone hath the honour of that. Levitical Priests, and bulls, and goats, and Altars, and Ceremonies might be Types * : * ἱερο-
but he was the Antitype and significati-
on of them all. *δείγματα,*
Patternes,
Heb. 9. 23.

Fifthly, other Priests entred onely into that place which was typically holy : *the Tabernacle was a figure for the time then present* Heb. 9. 8, 9. it was made with hands; and therefore it is called ^a *a worldly Sanctuary* : but Christ ^{αὐτοῦ ὁ ὅγιος}
is entred into that place, which is pro-
perly holy : *he is entred into Heaven* ^{αὐτοῦ ὁ ὅγιος} Heb. 9. 1.
self, now to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9. 24. and hence he is said to be a *Minister of the Sanctuary*, and of *the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.* Now from the typicalness of that Tabernacle of *Moses*, and the verity and substantialness of the Tabernacle, wherein Christ our High-Priest offered, we are taught, that if men in these *times of Reformation*, as the Apostle calls them, Heb. 9. 10. if in these times of more clear Evangelick Revelation since the coming and suffering of Christ; if in these times, wherein the
Church

Church of God hath put off her minority and childhood, and is come to be adult, as we say; is come to maturity and ripeness of age: if, I say, men in these times having the Gospel clearly and lightsomely preached unto them, will nevertheless cleave in any measure to Judaical rites and Ceremonies: if they will embrace shadows, now the substance is long since come; then truly they are *ipso facto* (as we speak) bar'd off from all benefit by Christ: so saith the Apostle: *We have an Altar whereof they have no Right to eat, which serve the Tabernacle, Heb. 13. 10.* If men will judaize and stick now to Mosaicall rudiments, they have no right to eat of the Christians Altar, that is, they have no part nor portion in Christ. Such another sentence we have, *Galar. 5. 2, 3, 4. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testifie again to every man, that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you is justified by the Law: ye are fallen from grace. That which is here said of circumcision, is true of all other Levitical rites: if we*
will

will retain any of them; Christ will not profit us: We are bound to keep the whole Law; if we observe a piece, we must observe all; and if we be justified by such legal observances, Christ avail-eth us nothing: We hold not the head when we cleave to such ordinances.

Sixthly, other Priests were to offer *first for themselves, and afterward for the people, Heb. 7. 27.* This was the injunction of the Law: *If the Priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring for his sin, that he hath sinned, a young Bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin-offering, Levit. 4. 3.* and in the 8. Chapter of that Book we read, how that Aaron and his Sons were to offer a sin offering at their consecration; we must understand for themselves. But it was not so with our High-Priest, the Lord Jesus: He offered for his people onely; as for himself he needed no sacrifice: *After three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off; but not for himself, Dan. 9. 26.* not for his own transgression: The Prince of this world came and tempted him; but could find no corruption in him, no yeilding to his tentations in the least measure:

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measure: he knew no sin, neither was there any guile found in his mouth: and it became us, that is, it was necessary and behoofefull for us, to have such an High-priest, as was holy, harmeless, undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. 7. 26. holy towards God, harmeless towards men, undefiled in himself, and totally separate from sinners, not contaminated or spotted with sin in the least measure.

Seventhly, consider this, that Christ is the most merciful, the most pitiful, and the most compassionate High-priest, that ever was: and therefore it was, that he was made like unto us, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, subject to hunger, thirst, cold, weariness, tentation, and the like, as we are. The Apostle Heb. 2. 16. saith, that this was behoofefull: he saith there, that he ought in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful, and a faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the people. Eli was the High-Priest in his time: but he failed much in the point of tenderness and consideration, when he judged the godly and gracious woman to be drunk: how long wilt thou be drunken

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drunken (said he) put away thy wine from thee, 1 Sam. 1. 14. whereas alas, she was far from it: she was a woman of a sorrowfull spirit (as she answers) and was in earnest prayer at that time. Christ our High-priest was more sensible and feeling of our affliction then so. *We have not an High-priest* (saith the Apostle) *which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are; yet without sin, Heb. 4. 15.* as it is said, that never any man spake as he spake: so I may say, that never was there any Priest, so mild, so gentle, so gracious, so loving, so tenderly affectionate, and so regardful of our condition, as Christ was: full to this purpose is that place in *Isaiah 63. 9.* *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.* And again: *he shall feed his flock like a Shepherd: he shall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosome; and shall gently lead those that are with young, Isaiah 40. 11.* And the bruised reed shall he not break, nor quench the smoking flax; that is, he shall compa-

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sionately

tionately bear with our slowness, our dulness, our small and weak beginnings, our little measure of grace, *untill he bring forth Judgment unto victory*, that is, till he overcome our corruptions, and give sentence of victory over sin and Satan. In the Law we read, that the High-priest was to bear the names of the children of *Israel* in his pectoral or brest-plate upon his heart; now this did figure and shadow unto us the tender love and pity that Christ the Mediatour bears to his people: guiding the blind, feeding the hungry, comforting the comfortless, restoring such as are out of joynt: all is mercy, and love, and sweetness, and more then motherly affection that comes from him. All these things are spoken of Christ, as Mediatour: and hence it is that he hath the title *πολύσπλαγχνός*, *one of many compassions*, Jam. 5. 11.

In the eight and last place I shall tell you of a wonder. Christ unlike to all other Sacrificers was both the Priest, the Temple or Tabernacle, the Altar, and the Sacrifice all in one person.

First, he was a Priest in respect of both natures; which will easily be granted,

red, if we consider the nature of a Mediatour, or Umpire, who ought to be one indifferent, and equally inclining to either party, like a pair of scales that hang even; neither side lift up, or depressed more than the other. A medi- atour is not of one, saith the Apostle, *Galat. 3. 20.* so did Christ indifferen- ly partake of both natures, Godhead, and Manhood; that so he might be fit to stand in the gap between his Father and us. We must believe therefore, that whole Christ offered up himself unto God; even the Manhood, as well as the Godhead, did offer it self: Christ is a Priest according to both natures. And whereas it is said, that he offered himself through the eternal Spirit without spot unto God, *Heb. 9. 14.* that doth not put the manhood from its share in priest-hood: but onely it shews how the Sacrifice came to be without spot or blemish; namely by the hypostatical union of the two natures, the eternal Spirit, that is, the God- head of Christ assuming the flesh into one person with it self.

Secondly, Christ was the Tabernacle or Temple most properly according to

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his God-head : for he saith himself in the Gospel, that *the Gold of the Temple is sanctified by the Temple it self* : so is the manhood sanctified and made noble by the God-head. Nevertheless in some respects his human body was the Temple also : *Destroy this Temple* (saith he) *and I will build it again in three dayes* ; he speaks it of his body, which is called a Temple not onely because the holy Spirit dwelt in it after a singular and peculiar way, conceiving it at the first, and sanctifying it perfectly ; but also because in the offering of it up, God found in it an acceptable sacrifice, and smelt in it a sweet savour as in a Temple. But yet further to this purpose : the flesh of Christ is called a *vail*, *Heb. 10. 20.* in which the Apostle alludes to the *operator* or *vail* in the Tabernacle of old, and in the Temple, by which alone there was entrance into the holiest place of all ; so by the *vail* of his flesh, rent and torn upon the Cross, hath Christ opened a new and a living way for us to pass to God, and to Heaven. Thus is he the Tabernacle or Temple according to both natures too.

Thirdly, Christ is the Altar most properly

properly according to his Divinity : for
he saith himself, that *the Altar doth sancti-
fifie the Gift*, *Matth. 23. 19.* And
thus doth the God-head like an Altar
sanctifie the Manhood, as a gift or sacri-
fice, making it of infinite merit, and
worth with God the Father : the
Altar ought to be of greater dignity
then the oblation. But now although
the God-head of Christ alone be the
sanctifying, and dignifying thing in re-
spect of the offering of himself, that is,
of his flesh unto God : yet in respect of
his presenting us blameless and a sa-
crifice, as it were, without spot and ble-
mish unto his father, so whole Christ,
God and man in one person is the san-
ctifying Altar, that makes us accepted
with God. The Scripture it self speak-
eth thus, *Isaiah 56. 6, 7.* God promi-
seth, *that he will bring even the sons of
the stranger (that is, the Gentiles) to his
holy Mountain, and make them joyfull in
his house of Prayer, and their burnt of-
frings, and their sacrifices shall be accepted
upon his Altar : for (saith he) mine house
shall be called an house of Prayer for all
people : in which place by the Altar we
are to understand whole Christ, God*

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and man, the blessed Mediatour, upon whom, as upon an Altar, all Nations promiscuously, both Jews and Gentils, were an offering acceptable to God. And a like place there is in *Isaiah 60. 7.* *All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee; the Rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine Altar, and I will glorifie the house of my glory.* Here also whole Christ is the Altar, that makes the Gentils to be (as I may say) a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling favour unto God. To this also tends that in *Isaiah 6. 7.* where a coal from the Altar touching the Prophets lips, his iniquity is taken away, and his sin purged: now what is it that taketh away iniquity, but the Lamb? what is it that purgeth sin, but the blood of Christ? although I grant (as before) that if we respect the offering of himself, the body and blood of Christ was most properly the sacrifice. I will add a few words more touching this matter out of Mr. *Brightman*, upon *Revel. 6. 9.* he saith, that the souls under the Altar are most eminently the Martyrs, whose salvation is placed onely in the death
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of Christ; under which those holy Champions lying hid, as under a Buckler, they might safely and without terror appear before God: now it is true, that this death of Christ in respect of himself was the sacrifice: but to the Martyrs, and to all the Saints, it is together with his God-head as an Altar, under which (and not under their own perfections and sufferings as any white meritorious) they lie safe and secure.

Lastly, Christ according to his manhood is most properly the sacrifice, *Heb. 10. 10.* yet for as much as whole Christ presents himself now in the sight of God for us: we are to judge that whole Christ, God and man was after a sort the oblation or offering; and hence the blood thereof is said to be *the blood of God, Acts 20. 28.* Nevertheless though in respect of us, who are reconciled, justified, sanctified and eternally saved thereby, whole Christ is offered up: yet let us be wise unto sobriety: Let us (as I may say) give unto *Cesar* the things that are *Cesar's*; and unto God the things that are Gods; that is, let us give unto each nature of Christ its own properties and offices: both his

Deity and his humanity did distinctly set their parts : his humanity by suffering the punishment due to us, and by fulfilling all righteousness : and his Deity by conferring upon those sufferings infinite and saving vertue. The human soul and flesh of Christ was the *holocausto*, or whole burnt-offring rosted in the fire of his Fathers wrath, his Godhead was the Temple in which, and the Altar upon which this sacrifice was offered ; and lastly, Christ both God and man, was the Priest most willingly and cheerfully officiating in this service.

Thus I have shewed you, that Christ unlike unto all other Priests was himself both the Priest, and the Sacrifice, and the Temple, and the Altar all in one person ; and in some respects also all according to both natures : so that well may he be called *wonderful*, as we read of him, *Isaiah 9. 6.* and well also may the Apostle say, that the *Mystery of Godliness is without controversie a great Mystery.*

Now then to conclude this discourse of Christs Priesthood. If he were a Priest alone ; an everlasting Priest, a
Priest

Priest offering but once, and yet sufficiently for ever ; the substance and verity of all those Priests , which went before him; gone into heaven, which never any did as Priests, but he onely , nor needing to offer for himself, but onely for us ; a most merciful and pitiful high-Priest: and lastly, sacrifice, Temple, Altar, and Priest, all in one : if Christ, I say, be such an high Priest, then certainly we must needs grant him even by this argument to be very precious and excellent.

Thirdly, Consider Christ as a King : and in this also his glory, his dignity, and his excellency shines forth most eminently. Christ is a King above all other Kings, and that in these respects.

First of all, his Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom : he rules over the souls and consciences of men : other Kings may subject the bodies and the estates of such as are under them ; but not their consciences. Indeed there hath been usurpation in this kind ; but never tolerated and allowed by Christ. One and the chiefest of all *Babylons* merchandize are *the souls of men*, Revel. 18.13. by her curses, excommunications, pardons, purgatory,

gatory, and the like inventions, she hath made merchandize of the souls, and domineer'd over the consciences of men. Episcopacy in all places more or less hath trodden in the same path; let the Reformists of these times have a care, that nothing be obtruded and thrust upon tender consciences, which they cannot bear: the heart, the soul, and the conscience, is properly the subject of Christs Kingdom: neither will he endure the subjection thereof to any other then himself: domination and lordship over the soul, is a part of his glory, which he will not give to another. The Church speaks it with indignation, *that her own mothers sons*, such as seemed to be of her numbers and corporation, being inflamed with rage against her, *made her the keeper of other vines, and to neglect her own*; that is, they forced her to serve

*Mr. Dudley Fenner in his exposition upon the place, printed: & Michael delburgh, 1587. in part their phantasies and pleasures * while she abated of her diligence in doing those duties, which God required of her, Cant. 1. 6. God challengeth the persons of the *Israelites* as his own servants, neither must they be sold as bondmen: because he brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, Levit. 25. 42. Now the like

like reason doth the Apostle give why we should not subject our hearts and consciences to the ordinances of men in matters of religion: *ye are bought with a price, (saith he) be not ye the servants of men,* 1 Cor. 7. 23. that is, do not mancipate and enslave your consciences to any humane devise in matters meerly spiritual. Christ alone is the King and Lord of our spirits; his Kingdom is spiritual; his Laws are spiritual; his people are spiritual; he rules in the Kingdoms of men, and meddles in their secular affairs all in order to his own spiritual Kingdome; Heathenish people have been tam'd and civiliz'd, that way might be made for their embracing of the Gospel. All the wars of the Nations, all their policies, and governments, all their risings and decayinges, all the great works that ever were done in the world, have tended by degrees at least to the advancement of Christs spiritual Kingdom: Christ hath still made them his pragentials to bring about his own ends. The *Assyrian* first subdued the Nations; after him the *Babylonian*; then the *Persian*. and the *Grecian* followed him; but the *Roman* went farther then them

them all : and when God had thus shaken the earth, and the Kingdoms of the world, then it was high time for Christ the desire of all Nations to come, and the Gospel to be more clearly preached, then before. I speak this to shew, how that Christ mingles himself even in worldly agitations and affairs, that thereby he may further and set forward his own spiritual Kingdom, and it should teach us to rule and steer our course in such things not carnally and grossly, as the Heathen do, but spiritually, as Christ doth; his Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom; so he tells *Pilate*; *My Kingdom*; (saith he) *is not of this world*, Joh. 18. 36. that is (saith Mr. *Luther*) he reigneth not according to the flesh, and the world; but he ruleth and sanctifieth in spiritual and heavenly things, as righteousness, truth, wisdom, peace, salvation: not as though all things of this world, and even of Hell it self were not also in subjection unto him (otherwise how could he preserve us and defend us from them all?) but because his Kingdom doth not consist either in them, or of them. Christs Kingdom is in heavenly and spiritual things,
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as in binding and loosing of the conscience, captivating the affections, and subduing the heart, in obedience to himself, and so bringing us by degrees unto glory. There be them, that tell us of a Monarchical Kingdom of Christ, whereby he shall in proper person reign a thousand years upon the earth, before the end and consummation of the world; which if it be a truth, yet I leave the opinion thereof to be scan'd and disputed of by the judicious. Truth and falsehood are brought to light by travail, industry, and disputation: *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased, Dan. 12. 4.*

Secondly, the Kingdom of Christ according to his Mediatorship is a universal Kingdom.

First, Universal it is in respect of all Nations; *There was given him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, and Nations, and languages, should serve him, Dan. 7. 17. The heathen are his inheritance, and the ends of the earth his possession.* *Ps. 2. 8.* The Monarchs of the world have stretched their Empires far: *Nebuchadnezzars Kingdom in Strabo reached as far as Spain, as Mr. Broughton delivers*
out

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out of that Author; The *Persians* pierced farther; *Alexander* farther then they; and the *Romans* farther then them all: but none of all these subdued the whole habitable, as Christ hath done, his subjects have been, and are to be gathered from the four winds all over the universe. The Apostle speaking of the preachers of the Gospel, saith, *That their sound went into all the earth, & their words unto the ends of the world*, Rom. 10. 18.

Secondly, Christs Kingdom is universal in respect of all sorts, ranks, and conditions of men. *Noahs Ark* was a shadow of the Church: Now as into that Ark came creatures of every kind: so into the Church, which is the Kingdom of Christ, are received people of all ages, sexes, professions and conditions whatsoever: if their conditions be such as thwart the laws and ordinances of that Kingdom, they are laid down, they are changed in the very act of their reception. This Kingdom doth not refuse any, that will submit to it: but all sorts of people may come and be accepted. This is elegantly set forth by the Prophet, *Esa. 41. 19.* where God promiset^h to plant in the Wilderness the Cedar,
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the Sitath-tree, the Myrtle, the Oyl-tree, the Fir-tree, the Pine, and the Box-tree together. This also is signified by the Net cast into the Sea, which gathereth fish of every kind, and so also of every kind are reserved as good: this net is an emblem of the Gospel preached, and called the Kingdom of heaven, because it doth form, promote and advance that Kingdom. The fish of every sort, which the net catches, do declare that people of all qualities are admittable into the Kingdom of Christ. This likewise was sweetly represented unto Peter by a sheet knit at the four corners, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts, of the Earth, and wild Beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air; and the Apostle was bid to arise, and to slay and eat. Now by this he was taught, that not onely the Gentils, as well as the Jews were to be received into the Kingdom of Christ: but also that in every Nation (as himself afterwards expounds it) He that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness is accepted with him, Acts 10. 35. Let him be of what trade and occupation, of what rank and quality, of what state and condition

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Acts 10.

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tion soever he will be, Christ will not refuse him coming unto him and submitting unto the Scepter of his Kingdom.

Thirdly, the Kingdom of Christ is universal in respect of the ages and times of the world: it runs through all ages, and it lasts from generation to generation. And hence it is, that Christ is called a *King immortal*, 1 Tim. 1. 17. having spoken of the long suffering of Jesus Christ, towards him in the precedent verse, he adds immediately; *now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God be honour and glory for ever and ever, amen*: Jesus Christ then is that God and King: and he is called *immortal* to distinguish him from all other Kings. The Kings of the world are mortal, they die, and leave their Kingdoms to others: but Christ is an immortal King, he never dieth; his Kingdom knows no period: it passes through all Epoches and tracts of time. Precious is Christ, that hath such a Kingdom; and happy are his Saints, that have such a King. When friends die; when Estates are gone; when the Sword rages; when sickness and death comes;

comes ; when any trouble or affliction is upon them ; yet to their unspeakable comfort they know . that their mighty King liveth and raigneth ; and so long as he is up , they cannot be so down , but they shall rise again . Christ is a King in all ages of the world from the beginning : *God is my King of old* (saith the Church) *Psal. 74. 12.* and Christ is God there spoken of, as appears by the words that follow : *God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the Earth* ; it is Christ the Mediatour, that works salvation in the midst of the Earth : for the Father hath committed all Judgment unto him ; he then is King of old , from the very first founding of the world ; and so shall continue to be while the Sun and Moon indure, as 'tis prophecied of him.

Fourthly, Christ's Kingdom is universal in respect of all Creatures ; *all power is given unto him both in heaven and in earth.* In respect of his providence the creatures are subject to him as God ; but as they serve to further the salvation of his elect, and to beautifie his Kingdom : so they are subject unto him as Mediatour. In *Ephes. 1. 22.* It is said of
I Christ,

Christ, that the Father hath put all things under his feet, and hath given him to be the head over all things to the Church: that is, so far forth as they can conduce to the good of the Church, so they are under the Kingdom of Christ as Mediatour.

Thirdly, Christ rules as King alone: he alone is *caput Ecclesie*, the head of the Church. When the Roman Empire was grown vast and unwedly, there were colleagues in government, two men of equal Authority, one to rule the East, and another to sway the West. And in some places during the minority of the King they chose a Regent, who hath Kingly Authority, and is *pro tempore* as a King. But it is not so in the Kingdom of Christ: he rules alone without a partner. *Unum non capit Regnum duos* is a most true saying here, this one Kingdom will not bear two Kings at once. Ridiculous is the Popes challenge to be the Ministerial head of the Church: Christ rules alone without any such Image of his government: he rules alone as head without either colleague in the largeness of his dominion, or Regent in his minority, sole,

sole, or Vice-Roy in his absence : he hath indeed Officers, that rule under him : but the headship and royalty he reserves as peculiar to himself ; he carries the government upon his own shoulders, as we read, *Isaiah 9. 6.* he alone hath sovereign power and Authority in governing of his Church : he alone hath supremacy of Regiment : he alone is Claviger, the Key-carrier to his Church, *Isa. 22. 22.* It is written thus of *Eliakim* : *the Key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder : so he shall open and none shall shut ; and he shall shut, and none shall open :* Now herein was this Saint a lively figure and type of Christ : the words of the Prophecie are applyed to Christ, in his advertisement to *Philadelphia*, *Revel. 3.* and the sense is this : that look as *Eliakim* was made Steward, or Treasurer under *Hezekiah*, that is, the next unto the King in government all over the Land, to command, to forbid, to permit, to reward, to punish, to do Justice, and to repress all disordered, of which Authority the bearing of a Key on the shoulder was a badge : so Christ as Mediatour under his Father hath regal power and Au-

thority over his Church; where he commands in chief, as I may say; and no man may lift up his hand, or foot without him: he hath the Key of the house of *David* upon his shoulder, to prescribe, to inhibit, to call, to harden, to save, and to destroy at his pleasure; such a Monarch and King is Christ over his Church; neither hath any, such rule and soveraignty beside him.

Fourthly, Christ is an eternal and everlasting King: he receives a Kingdom, *that cannot be shaken*; there shall be no end of it: his Throne endureth for ever. God rent away the Kingdom from *Saul* and others; and *Mene, Mene*, was upon *Belshazzars* Kingdom, a full numbring and finishing the dayes of it: but Christs Kingdom is everlasting, and shall never expire; let the enemies thereof use what art and craft they will; they shall never destroy it, or pluck it up. *The God of Heaven* (saith the Prophet) *shall set up a Kingdom; which shall never be destroyed; neither shall it be left to other people: but it shall stand for ever*, Dan. 2. 44. If that of the Apostle be objected, where he saith, *that Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*,
1 Cor.

1 Cor. 15. 24. I answer, that this doth nothing at all impeach the everlastingness of Christs Kingdom: for the meaning of it is this: that at the general Resurrection, and the end of the world, Christ shall lay down his Mediatorship, and shall deliver up all his Elect and faithful Members, of whom now his Kingdom consists, unto his Father, to be eternally crowned and glorified: and this shall be then, when he shall have reconciled some of his Enemies, spoyled desperate ones of their abused rule, power and authority, and quite abolished death, the last Enemy: so that then Christ shall cease to reign any longer as Mediatour: he shall then cease to reign according to the present dispensation, and administring of his Office: but not as one God co-essential with the Father: for his Kingdom according to his God-head shall then be compleat, consummate and perfect: yea and his humanity also shall reign then not as by, or of it self, but as joyned in one person with his God-head, and as the common head of all those, whom he hath redeemed, and sanctified and brought to glory through

taking their nature upon him, and suffering in it. So that the forementioned place in the *Corinthians* doth not speak of the abolishing of Christs Kingdom; but of the perfection of it rather, when God, whose glory is now much obscured and darkned by Enemies, shall be all in all among his Saints; and the eternal Father shall triumph eternally in his Son as a final Conquerour.

The like answer also must be given to the objection, which may be made from the words of the Apostle. *1 Cor. 15. 28.* where he saith, *that the Son also himself shall be subject unto him, that did put all things under him.* These words are not so to be understood, as if the Father were not for the present well pleased with the Son, or as if the Son were not already subject to the Father, as Mediatour: but the meaning of them is this: that when all things, which do now during the present form of his administration make opposition and resistance against Christ, shall be subdued unto him, and brought under his feet; then Christ himself also, as touching his Mediatorship,

ship, shall be subject unto the Father, and God shall be all in all; neither doth this subjection imply a depressing, or pulling down lower: but rather Christ and his Saints shall be at the height and top of their glory, when they shall be so subject; as on the other side whosoever shall not then be so subject, they shall be at the bottom of all remediless misery and wretchedness.

Before I pass away to another head, I must needs touch again upon a place of Scripture before cited, *1 Tim. 1.17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, &c.* Here be two words that do express the perpetuity and everlasting duration of Christs Kingdom, *eternal, and immortal*, and neither of them is idle or superfluous: the Holy Ghost doth not use tautologie or vain repetition in them. I have shewed you already what is meant by *immortal*, namely that the Kingdom of Christ is not subject to succession; it is not liable to be devolved and rould down to after-comers; which *Daniel* expresseth thus; *his Kingdom shall not be left unto other people*, as the Monarchies of the *Babylonians, Medes, Alexander*, and the

Kingdoms of the *Seleucida*, which the Prophet had spoken of were ; they were translated from Nation to Nation, and from man to man, and at last quite dissolved. But Christ Kingdom shall not be pluck't up for others beside himself ; but it shall hold on constantly through all ages and centuries of the world unto the end : and when the end cometh, it shall not expire and give up the Ghost ; but it shall attain to its full beauty and perfection ; it shall come to its meridian, or vertical point, as I may say, and shall never decline, never decay : it shall last beyond the world, and beyond all time for 'ever : therefore the Apostle calls Christ not onely an *immortal King*, but also an *eternal King*. Thus you see, that the Spirit of God doth to good purpose use two words, somewhat of kin in signification one to the other ; that thereby he might set forth the excellency of Christs Kingdom above all other Kingdoms : by the one word is shewed the course of his Kingdom, through this world, during the time of his Mediatourship : and by the other word is declared the lasting of it unto all eternity,

nity, after his Mediatorship is laid down.

Lastly, Christ is matchless and eminent above all other Kings in all Royall vertues, endowments, and accomplishments.

First, he is a most sapient and wise King, called therefore *Counsellour* by the Prophet, and *only wise*, by the Apostle, the *wonderful Numberer*; he that sealeth up the sum, full of wisdom: none essentially wise, but he: none but are depending and beholding for their wisdom, but he, his foolishness is wiser then men: they be all doters to him. Earthly Kings have their Counsellours; but he needs none: *Solomon* was the wisest among them: but a greater then *Solomon* is here.

Secondly, he is *Rex armipotens, & bellicosus*, a most puissant and warlike King; called therefore *a man of War*, the *Lord of Hosts*, the *Captain of our Salvation*: the armies in Heaven, Angels and righteous men follow him; he is the stone cut out of the Mountain without hands, sent from heaven, and acting by no humane, but meerly Divine Authority, which smote the Image and brake
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The preciousness of Christ

in pieces, the iron, the brass, the clay, the Silver and the Gold; the great Monarchies and Kingdoms of the world, to make way for his own Kingdom: he is terrible to all the Kings of the Earth that withstand him, he is so mighty and so politick, that he gets ground of his enemies by giving ground to them. The world, Hell, Death, sin, the Accuser of the brethren, the enmity of the carnal mind, all these are in the Trophes of his victories. All his foes are and shall be made his footstool: he will make even the proudest of them to stoop and to hold his stirrup: yea he will make them his very stirrup to get on horse-back by, as once Sapor the Persian served Valerian the Roman Emperor.

Thirdly, Christ is as eminent in peace also, as he is in war; called therefore *the Prince of Peace*. When he was born, wars were hushed every where, and all the world was at peace. *Jacob* beheld him as a ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven, and what was this, but the Image of a Peace-maker betwen God and man? *the Angels of God ascended and descended by that ladder,*
signifying

signifying, that by Christ we have the benefit of the Ministry of Angels: they ascend to receive new commission from God concerning the Saints, and again descend to execute it; by Christ also our prayers as Intelligencers and signifiers of our wants do ascend into the presence of God: and again his blessings, as Angels and Messengers of his good will towards us, do descend and light upon us. Thus is Christ a ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven, partaking of both, God and man in one person; our blessed Reconciler, and Peace-maker: he died to purchase peace for us: when he went away he left his peace with us: and he reigns for ever to maintain our peace. *Melchisedec* was King of *Salem*, that is, King of Peace, nominally and in a figure onely: but Christ is the very body and substance of that shadow.

Fourthly, Christ is a most just and righteous King: he reigns in righteousness, he speaks in righteousness, he makes war in righteousness, he betroths his Church to him in righteousness, he delivers her from her Enemies in righteousness, he answers her prayers

prayers in righteousness, he doth all in righteousness. Neither is he personally righteous alone; but efficiently also: not onely righteous himself; but he makes others so too; *just, and a Justifier*, as the Apostles phrase is: called therefore *יהוה צדקנו*, *the Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. He is our true *Melchisedec, King of righteousness*: that King in *Abrahams* dayes bore the name, that he might be a Type of our King.

Lastly, Christ is a most mild and merciful King, meek, gentle, long-suffering: he is the true propitiatory, or Mercy-seat: that in the Tabernacle of old did but prefigure him: he keeps mercy for thousands; his mercy is everlasting: his mercy indureth for ever is the *versus amœbaus*, or the bearing of the song, as we say, in the 136. *Psalms*; He delights in mercy: yea, it is so pleasing to him, that even in wrath he remembers it; he bears long with his Enemies, he forgives them, he dies for them, he saves them eternally, and crowns them with glory for ever.

Thus I have shewed you, that Christ is a King, a Spiritual King, a universal King over all Nations, ranks
of

of men, ages of the world, and over all Creatures : a King ruling alone without a mate or associate ; an everlasting King , and eminent above all other Kings in all royal vertues and qualifications , as wisdom , fortitude , peaceableness, Righteousness, Mercy, and the like. Where shall we find such a King , as this ? It is said of *Solomon* , that there was *no King like him*, and so of *Josiah* : but it may more truly and properly be said so of the Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly King. On Earth there be Kings , that have rule and domination over other Kings : but Christ hath them at his steps and under his girdle, as we say : and they for the most part have such command by usurpation and incroachment : but Christ is so constituted of his Father : *I will make him my first-born , higher then the Kings of the Earth*, Psal. 89, 27. and all this is for the good of the Saints : certainly then Christ must needs be very precious unto Believers.

Having spoken of Christ as Mediatour, I come now to commend him to you as God : and here we be come to the supream and highest pitch of all glory.

glory. Here are fathomless depths, and bottomless bottoms, if I may so speak : here are stupendous and amazing Mysteries ; altonishing, and confounding excellencies, such as the holy Angels themselves cannot pierce into : God is *θεὸς ὁμιῶν ἀπρόσιτον*, *dwelling in inaccessible light*, 1 Tim. 6. 16. here are such beauties and perfections, that had I (as the Poet speaks) a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths, and a voice of steel : yet I could not sufficiently describe them ; but must be driven with the Philosopher to ask more dayes to think of it ; and at length resolve, as he did, that the matter is so intricate and perplexed, so inscrutable, and unsearchable, that I cannot resolve. Nevertheless let me say something, though I do it but slenderly and weakly, as children do of mens matters.

Christ then is in the altitude and summity of all glory, one eternal God with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost : proved to be so by a cloud of witnesses : we have the Authority of the sacred scriptures both in the Old and New Testament for it most frequently :
 where

where he is called *God*, and *Jehovah*, the only begotten Son of God, the Image of the Father, his substantial Image, and not as the form of a face in a glass: also to him are attributed such things, as can agree to none but God: he is said to be equal with the Father, eternal, the author of election, a searcher of hearts; one that must be believ'd in, sworn by, worshipped with Divine worship; one that gives eternal rewards; one that hath power to pardon sin; one that doth illuminate by the Spirit; one that shall judge both quick and dead; one that is omnipotent; one that hath power to work Miracles, to create, to send the Holy-Ghost; one that hath power to raise himself and others; one in whose name we must be baptised, and the like *Parans* that Gödly and learned Divine of *Heidelburgh* in his Commentary upon the Revelation, pick's out of the text of that book no less then forty two Arguments of the Divinity of Christ. By all which we may see the blasphemy of those who have affirmed him to be no more then a particular God, and *ὁμοῖος πατρί*; but not *ὁμοῖος*, like unto the Father; but not of the.

the same Essence and substance with him. But we shall farther see the madness of these men, if we consider these particulars.

First of all, Christ shines as a Sun in the firmament of the world, in all perfection and sufficiency of wisdom, power, goodness, love, Majesty and glory.

Secondly, whatsoever measure the most excellent of the creatures have of these things they are beholding unto him for it: he is the never failing spring and fountain of all blessing and goodness. Now the Logical Rule is, *quod efficit tale, illud magis est tale*, that which makes a thing to be so as it is, is much more so it self: if the creatures be full of beauty and excellency, and yet all in a derivative way: how unspeakably excellent then and beautiful is he, that is the Beginning of the creatures of God, and made them all so as they are? whatsoever energies or powers they have, they are but relative and borrowed, as the Light of the Moon from the Sun, and also subject to subordination: but in Christ according to his God-head all is absolute, and compleat; and all without him is *by him*
and

and for him; of him, and through him, and by him are all things, saith the Apostle, Ro. 11. 36. Great dispute hath been among the *Philosophers* about the *Summum bonum*, the chief and sovereign good: now loe here it is. *Finis et bonum conuertuntur*, saith the *Logician*, the end, and good are coincident and come both to one. Christ then being God, and God the ultimate and farthest end of all things; it follows necessarily, that Christ is the *Summum bonum*, and the top of all felicity and happiness.

Thirdly, whatsoever vertue or goodness is in the creature, it is not of the essence and substance of the creature, but onely an accident, or an inherent quality: as a man may be said to be wise, mighty, just, merciful; but not wisdom, strength, Justice, and mercy, as God may; who is all this, and much more in the very abstract, as we speak, whatsoever then is properly attributed unto Christ, as God, we cannot divide it from his very essence. It is proper to substances and material things, to have accidents adhering and cleaving unto them: but God is immaterial, and ~~unresolvable~~ without matter, and above

all substance; and therefore above all predicament, as time, place, quantity, quality, and the like: Whatsoever is in God, it is essential to him; a man may be a man still, though he be neither knowing, nor valiant, nor just, nor gracious; but take away these from God, and you destroy his very essence and being. Now then if Christ be God, we may see by this, that he doth infinitely surmount in praises all the most lovely and most desirable creatures in the world. Mark how the Prophet depresses them all in relation to God, *Isaiah 40. 15. 17.* He saith, *that all Nations are unto God as a drop of water unto to a bucket-full, or as the small dust that cleaves to the balance, is to the great and heavie weights, that are put therein: and yet this is not enough to shew the disparity; therefore the Prophet adds, that they are to God as nothing: neither doth this suffice to empty the creature enough; but he goes a degree farther, and saith, that they are in comparison of God less then nothing and vanity.* Now believe it, all this is no more then is true of Christ: he is according to his God-head arrayed with
all

all this glory : all the creatures are to him, but as drops to bucket-fulls, or as moles to ponderous weights : yea, they are as nothing, and less then nothing and vanity. Christ hath a name above every name ; all creatures in Heaven and in Earth, and under the Earth must stoop to him : I may truly say, that they be all to him, but as the shadow of a shadow, like the reflection of a Rain-bow, when it seems to be doubled in the cloud. The Rain-bow it self is but a shadow ; what is then the shadow of this shadow ? nay, what is the third generation of a shadow ? as sometimes, when the reflection is very strong, three are seen at once. Truly all creatures, even the most excellent of them must stand in the very lowest degree of these, if compared unto Christ ; how precious then, how worthy beyond all thought and computation is he ?

Let us draw some conclusion from the God-head of Christ farther to set forth his preciousness, and then we will conclude this most weighty and considerable reason. We will do it by Scripture aphorismes, and the first shall be this.

The preciousness of Christ

Fair weather cometh out of the North, with God is terrible Majesty, Job 37. 22. the meaning of it is this, that though the creature may be pleasing and flexible enough, and there may be fair quarter between man and man: yet not so with God: if he be once provok't, with him there is terrible and dreadful Majesty. Now this is true of Christ. *Behold, I send my Angel before thee* (saith God) *to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee in to the place, which I have prepared: beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him,* Exod. 23. 20. 21. The Angel here spoken of is Christ, as appears by this, that he hath power to pardon sin, and Gods name is in him, that is, he is essentially God: for Gods name and attributes are his very essence. But what is this to the preciousness of Christ, you will say? here is terrour and dread-striking Majesty: but what makes this to the purpose in hand? I answer, very much: for first of all, Gods terribleness doth not impeach the happy condition of the Saints, because they be in Christ: the terrors of the Law cannot reach them: their

their hearts are so fortified and established with Faith, that they are able to meditate of death, and Hell, and damnation, and the most terrible things that are, without trembling, without any slavish fear or dread*. Secondly, it makes very much for the good of the Church of God, that some by the threatening terror of Judgments are reduced to obedience and good order; and others, that are refractory and incorrigible, are cut off by the stroke of them: this I say, makes much for the good of the Church: when noxious humours are purged out of the body, all the parts are at ease, and in a healthful State: so when wicked men are either awed and repressed, or quite extinct and cut off, the corporation of the Saints must needs enjoy much peace and quietness thereby. The terror then that is in Christ doth not a whit take off from his preciousness. What Saint is there, that doth not with much comfort and hearts contentment read that place of Scripture, *Revel. 6. 15, 16. The Kings of the Earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and*

* Isa. 33.
18.

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every free-man hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the Mountains: and said to the Mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? The men that are here in such a fear, are the enemies of the Church; and what faithful soul doth not rejoyce at the ruine of such? Secondly, *God cannot lye* is another Scripture Aphorisme, *Tit. 1. 2.* then if Christ be God, we may build upon this, that all his promises, and particularly those concerning eternal Life and salvation, shall surely be made good: so saith the Apostle in the place to *Titus* before mentioned: *in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Christ is not only *verax*, speaking truly; but *ipsa veritas*, truth it self. He is the *Amen*; the faithfull and true witness: *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of his word shall fall to the ground.* Now this likewise sets forth the preciousness of Christ not a little. Among men he is counted a very choyce and precious

precious person, that is a man of his word; how much more then is Christ precious, whose eternal essence and being is Truth, who cannot lie as men can, and with whom there is not the least variableness, or shadow of turning?

Lastly, whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever, &c. is another Scripture aphorisme, *Eccles. 3. 14.* Then let the Devill himself and all enemies do their worst: they shall never be able with all their might and policy, Engines and Stratagems to overthrow and frustrate the salvation of Gods elect: but it shall abide for evermore permanent then the ancient Mountains and everlasting hills of the world: and this must needs be so; because their Redeemer is God, God by nature, and furnished with Divine power, such as all creatures, even the most able of them, must yeild unto. Now what is there, that can make Christ more precious to a believing soul, than this? God it is, that works all our works in us, and for us; the whole structure of our salvation is of his founding and raising; and whatsoever God doth, it shall be

for ever, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; now we have abundantly proved, that Christ is God: our salvation then doth not stand upon our own mutable and variable will; nor upon the weak-leggs of our own power, which is as nothing; but upon the unchangeable counsel and mighty power of God; in which our Lord Jesus hath a great share, as either the Father, or the Holy-Ghost.

Thus I have given you some taste of Scripture aphorismes, as I call them leaving the rest to private observation and collection. And this know assuredly, that whatsoever is said of God in the Scriptures, a Spiritual man and a Believer may see in it the preciousness of Christ, and one way or other suck sweetness out of it.

Reas. 4. I proceed to a fourth Reason. Christ must needs be a most precious, a most lovely, a most delightful, and a most desirable object to a believing soul, because he is most absolute for all manner of supply: and the supply which he makes to Believers is,

- 1. Full.
- 2. Sutable.
- 3. Constant.

First,

First, it is a full supply, if there be Light in the Sun, the air cannot be dark: if there be sappe in the stock, the branches cannot be dry: if there be fulness in the fountain the streames cannot be empty.

This full supply through Christ is manifested by all those types and shadows, which of old had relation to him. The striking of the blood of the Pascall Lamb on the posts of the doors, where the Israelites dwelt was a token and assurance to them, that the destroying Angel should pass over them, and smite onely, the first born of the Egyptians: now what else did that blood prefigure but the blood of Christ? wherewith the Elect being sprinckled, the Destroyer cannot hurt them. This blood certainly is the ink of the Angels ink-horn, spoken of in *Ezek. 9. 3.* wherewith the Godly are marked for deliverance, while others perish and are cut off. The pillar of the cloud by day, and of fire by night was a type of Christ, leading and guiding his people continually. The water of the Rock and the *Manna* in the wilderness were signs, that Christ should
spiritually

spiritually feed and refresh his people. The Serpent of brass lifted up by *Moses*, signified, that he should be their Physician and healer. All the sacrifices of the Law did typifie, that Christ should make atonement for Believers. The Ark or Holy Chest in the Tabernacle did likewise represent Christ unto us; in whom God hath treasured up all perfection of wisdom, grace, power, goodness and mercy: *for it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell, Coloss. 1. 19.* Now from the redundancy and overflowing fulness of all blessing that is in Christ, Believers do receive their sufficiency and fulness: *of his fulness (saith the Apostle) we all receive, and grace for grace, Joh. 1. 16.* that is, graces answerable to every communicable grace of Christ; that as face answereth to face in water, so we may in all things be like unto our head.

Secondly, the supply that we have by Christ is sutable also. The faithfull soul looks upon him, and saith, loe, here is most precious and pure blood to wash away my guilt; here is strength to support me in my weakness; here is a garment of righteousness to
cover

cover the shame of my nakedness; here is a spirit of Truth to lead me and guide me in all my wayes; here are sweet mercies and consolations to comfort me in my droopings; here are gold and Pearles, and precious stones to enrich me with; here is perfect purity and holiness to sanctifie and cleanse my corrupt nature; in a word here is the plenitude and fulness of all grace to fill my empty and destitute soul.

The Spirit of the Lord annointed Christ, and did solemnly design him to be home unto every Saints condition, and *to be made* (as the Apostle saith of himself) *all things to all men*: he was annointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up broken hearts, to proclaim Liberty to Captives, to appoint beauty for ashes, joy for mourning, and garments of festivity, and praise for sad and heavy spirits. Christ is (as I may say) for every turn: he hath in him sufficiency relative and sutable to all conditions: there is no disease, but this Physician can cure, no case, but this Counsellour can resolve us, and direct us in, no Enemie, but this Champion can conquer, no difficulty, but this mighty

Isa. 61. 1,
2, 3.

mighty Saviour can overcome : he is made unto us of God all that we stand in need of, wisdom to cure our folly, righteousness to justify our persons, Sanctification to purifie our nature, and Redemption from those many sorrows and miseries, which we here are subject to. As *Job* saith, that he was *eyes to the blind, and feet to the Lame, and a Father to the poor* : so is Christ made every thing unto Believers in proportion to their wants. As *Elisha*, when he raised a child to life, *put his mouth upon the childs mouth, his eyes upon the childs eyes, his hands upon the childs hands*, still familiar parts were applyed to similiar : so doth Christ apply himself to us in a relation fitting and answering to every necessity.

Thirdly, the supply that we have from him is likewise constant : 'tis not like a winter-bourne, that failes, and dries up in the Summer : but it is as the streams of living waters, and of an ever-springing Fountain. Christ doth not onely give grace : but maintains it. It was a just complaint which long ago was made against the Heathen Gods ;
*O faciles dare summa Deos eademque tueri
 Difficiles !* They

They could give their Favourites great gifts ; but they could not maintain them in the possession of them. The Lord Jesus Christ our blessed benefactor is not so : he gives to his Saints not onely the first grace ; but the grace of perseverance also. As *David* said in another case : *thou maintainest my lot* : so doth Christ maintain that lot of grace, which he bestows upon his faithful Members : he is the Author, and finisher of our faith : *his gifts and calling are ἀμεταμέλητα*, without Repentance : he is not like the foolish man, that began to build and was not able to finish : but having begun a good work in his Saints, he will finish it, and make it persevere unto his own day : and then when grace is full he will crown it with eternal glory. Now by that which hath been said, we may see that the condition of Believers, and of such as are ingrafted into Christ, is far better, then was that of *Adam* in his innocency : he had excellent gifts of knowledge and grace conferred upon him : but he was never confirm'd in them : and therefore being left to the mutability of his own will, he chose the

the evil, and lost the good : but it is not so with the saints now ; under the Covenant of grace by Christ ; whatsoever heavenly endowments they have, they are confirmed and established in them ; so that they can never be lost. *Maries* good part, which she had chosen, could *never be taken from her*. The Saints and their graces are in the hand of God ; and who can snatch them out of that mighty and powerful hand ? *Mount Zion standeth fast for ever : and the Lord is about his people, as the Mountains are about Jerusalem ;* they are therefore in a most safe and persevering condition. In *Solomon's Temple* there were two pillars , the one was called *1 Kings 7. Jachin*, and the other *Boaz, 1 Kings 21.* as much as to say *stability and strength* : now what doth this figure unto us ? but the more then brazen steadfastness and strength of the Church of God , of all the members of it, and of all their saving graces ; which can never perish, never decay ; but shall dure beyond the world unto all eternity, never to be broken , as the two staves *Zach. 11. Beauty and Bands* were, which the Prophet speaks of : but still to be supplied

ed by the Spirit of Christ with fresh strength and abilities; and so to last for ever and ever.

Fifthly, look upon Christ as upon the most gainful and profitable thing to the soul, that can be imagined: nothing more commodious, nothing more enriching then Christ is. And verily Christ is absolute gain. *Reas. 4.*

§ Universal gain.

§ And gain for himself.

First he is absolute gain: absolute, because whatsoever we give unto him, we lose it not, there is no alienation of it: but it is ours still, and ours in a far safer custody and keeping, then in our own: if we cast our affections upon Christ, they be not lost: he onely makes them better: if we give them to the world, they differ little or nothing from the affections of beasts: but if Christ have them, he makes heavenly and gracious, and such as will fit us for the presence of God: if we lay down our lives for him, they be not lost neither, but gained unto life eternal, *Math. 10. 39.*

Again, the necessity of getting Christ makes him to be absolute gain to such,

as

as have him : the necessity of a thing puts worth upon it : it is not absolutely necessary to be rich, or honourable, or great in the world : but Christ being the life of our souls, and one without whom we cannot subsist happily ; he must needs be of absolute necessity : and therefore absolute gain unto us. *Without me (saith Christ) you can do nothing,* Joh. 15. 5. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine ; and if it bear no fruit, men cast it into the fire and burn it : so if we be not in Christ, and abide in him ; we can bear no good fruit : and for such, as bear no good fruit, the fire of *Gehenna* is prepared : how absolutely necessary then is Christ ? and how absolutely gainfull to us, if once we have him ?

Secondly, Christ is universally gain.

First, universal for all persons, rich, and poor ; young, and old ; noble, and ignoble ; Learned, and unlearned ; bond, and free : there is no man rich without Christ : neither is there any poor, that have him : none noble without him ; none ignoble with him : none learned, or free without him ; none bond, or unlearned with him.

There

There be distinctions in the world among men, honouring some, and debasing others; exalting some, and depressing others: but in the body of Christ they are not to be found. *There is neither Jew, nor Greek; there is neither bond, nor free; there is neither male, nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus,* saith the Apostle, *Galat. 3. 28.*

Secondly, Christ is universal gain in respect of all times. *All things are beautiful in their season,* saith *Solomon*: Muck is good: but it is so onely in a time, fit for mirth: food is good: but it is so onely, when men are hungry: cloathing is good: but it is then, for them that are naked: and Physick also is good; but it is, when men are sick and distempered: but Christ is seasonable at all times; He is that tree of life, that bears *twelve sorts of fruit*; and before the old store is done, new comes: for *it yields fruit every moneth,* *Revel. 22. 2.* Christ is never out of season; and therefore universally gainful.

Thirdly, Christ is gain also to all things. In Christ are made unto us promises of all sorts, both of this life, and of that, which is to come: for which

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cause

cause the Apostle saith, that *Godliness is profitable for all things*. When the Hab. 2. 4. Prophet saith, that *the just shall live by his Faith*, we must conceive, that it is true, as well of food, and raiment, and temporal deliverance, as of Justification, Sanctification. and eternal salvation: this is not so well observ'd by Christians, as it ought to be: for many can trust Christ with their souls; but not with their bodies, not with their Estates. Peter rested upon him for salvation; *thou hast the words of eternal life*, saith he: but he could not trust him with the safety of his flesh: for going to him on the water, he doubted, and *began to sink*. But believe it, whatsoever our weaknesses are; whatsoever our ignorance, our doubting, our forgetfulness; Christ is profitable for all things; both for soul and body, for this life, and for the life to come for ever.

Thirdly, Christ is gain for himself, other things are gainful in aspect and relation to their ends; as wealth is good to supply want, food to maintain life, cloaths to keep off the cold air, a staff to support feeble leggs, a bed to
rest

rest weary limbs on, and the like : but Christ is a rich and inestimable treasure to the soul, without reference to a further end, than himself : he is to be desired even for himself. *Wisdom is better than Rubies ; and all the things , that may be desired, are not to be compared to it,* Proverb. 8. 11. And doubtless Christ is the wisdom there spoken of. Now then if Christ be the most gainfull thing in the world, absolute gain : universal gain, and gain for himself, without aim at some better thing : if Christ be thus gainful, I say, who can deny him to be most precious and excellent ? I pass to a sixth Reason.

Sixthly, then Christ is precious to Believers, because of the attractiveness, and alluring vertue Reas. 6.

} Of his Love.
} Of his Beauty.
} Of his Grace.

First of his love, *Magnes amoris est amor* : Love is the attractive Load-stone of Love : and never was there such a love, as Christ's love to his Elect ; free and undeserved ; from everlasting to everlasting ; cast upon them even when they were enemies, and in their stoma-

chous grassations and rebellions ; overcoming all difficulties and oppositions, all peevish frowardness and prevarications after reconciliation ; never wearied or tired out with any provocations ; a love lifting up *Adam*, Earthly man as high as Heaven, and translating *Enoch*, miserable and enthralled man into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God ; a love infinite, and past comprehending : so that well might the Apostle set a *Behold* to it : *Behold* (saith he) *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God, Joh. 3. 1.* and the Father was not alone in this Love ; but the Son and the Holy-Ghost too : if the love of the Saints to Christ be so hot, that *many waters of affliction cannot quench it*, nor the floods of persecution drown it ; if it will not be scourged or exchanged for any wealth : if it *be strong as death and cruel as the grave*, urging and constraining them to lay down life and all for him ; if the coals thereof be *coals of fire*, which hath a most vehement flame, as we read, *Cant. 8. 6, 7* What is then the love of Christ to his people, who is not onely loving but

but love it self in the very abstract? certainly such a love as this cannot but be very attractive and drawing, very conciliating and winning: it must needs like the first wheele move and turn about all our affections; our desire to enjoy Christ; our joy in the fruition of him, our love toward him, our fear to displease him, our anger, when he is offended, our jealousie of losing him. Our nature is such, that we will love, where we are first loved; as the heat of the Sun-beames reflects from a wall: so Christs love to us cannot but cause a reflection of ours upon him: ours is but a spark of his: *we love him* (saith the Apostle) *because he loved us first*: when he reveals his love to us, such a fire must needs kindle and melt our affections, be they never so key-cold and frozen.

Ioh. 4.
19.

Secondly, the beauty of Christ is likewise very attractive. I do not mean it of the aspect and face, of the outward lineaments and proportion of his body, although his comeliness in that behalf need not to be doubted of, being formed in the sanctified womb of a Virgin by the Holy-Ghost: but of

The preciousness of Christ

his spiritual beauty and gracefulness. Now we know, that true beauty consists

In fairness of complexion.

And in a just symmetry or proportion of parts.

Neither of these was wanting in Christ.

First, he was of a fair and comely complexion, as the Church describeth him, *Cant. 5. 10. My beloved is white and ruddy*, saith she, the mixture of these two colours makes a beautiful and good complexion : *White* and *red* as they shew the best temperature in man ; so here it may signifie in Christ, his Godhead and manhood. Christ appeared in a vision *all white as snow, and pure as fine wooll*, *Dan. 7. 9.* And man had his name *Adam* from the red mould or Earth, that his body was made of ; and Christ vouchsafed to be like unto us in this. Again, the red colour may signifie the bloody sufferings of Christ ; and the white his righteousness thereby ; inherent in himself ; but conveyed to all his members by Gods free imputation : righteousness is so described by *white linnen*, *Reuel. 19. 8.* Now
this

this temperament, and mingling of white and red after such a myſtical way in Chriſt, denotes the ſurpaſſing beauty of Chriſt, makes him precious to the Saints, and inflames their affections to embrace him, and follow him.

Secondly, in Chriſt there is alſo a comely proportion of parts: from the correſpondency and agreement of parts ariſeth a feature compleatly beautifull and lovely. This every faithful ſoul finds in Chriſt. The Church enumerates and reckons up all his parts, Cant. 5. 10. &c. *his head as moſt fine gold; his locks buſhie, and black as a Raven, excellently well agreeing with a fair face; his eyes as the eyes of Doves by the rivers of water, waſhed with milk, and fitly ſet; his cheeks as a bed of ſpices, as ſweet flowers; his lips like Lillies, dropping ſweet-smelling mirrhe; his hands as gold Rings, ſet with the Berill; his belly as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires; his leggs as pillars of Marble ſet upon ſockets of fine Gold; his countenance as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars; and his mouth or voyce moſt ſweet: What a pleaſant harmony and ſpecious conſent of parts is here?*

figuring unto us the supreme and absolute Government of Christ, his unsearchable Counsels, his pure nature hating all impurity and uncleanness, his amiable and delightful smiling upon his Saints, his gracious promises and soul-saving instructions, all his actions and administrations just and holy, his mercies and inward affections very precious like the Saphire, that glittereth with golden points, the workings of his spirit in his Saints, most firm and stedfast like marble pillars, the whole shew and cast of his person most glorious, most excellent, most Majestical, and yet most delightful, like the forrest of Lebanon, and the stately Cedars, that grew in it: so that he is altogether lovely; all over from top to toe (as we say) desirable, and the chiefest among ten thousand, as much as to say, matchless and incomparable: on earth and in all the world there is not his like, who is made without spot or blemish; yea, who is made and not made; a creature, and yet the mighty Creatour of all things, God and man in one person, wholly excellent and beautiful, every part fyttable,

a most ravishing and wooing object.

Thirdly, Christ is attractive in his graces considered, either as inherent in himselfe,

Or infused into Beleevers.

First, as they be inherent in himselfe, they transcend in excellency all the thought and conceit both of men and Angels: they have (if I may so speak) a most fragrant smell and allicient quality in them, compared therefore to sweet spices and ointments, as *myrrhe*, *aloes*, *frankincense*, *spikenard*, and the like. As these are delightfull to our senses: so are the graces of Christ to a beleeving soule, attracting the affections, winning the love of the heart, making all other things vile and base in comparison of him; that the soul loathes them, and spues at them, as I may say, when they offer to stand in competition with him. It was the grace of Christ, that made him so glorious as we read of, *Joh. 1. 14. We beheld his glory* (saith the Apostle) *as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;* that is, wee beheld him glorious in all perfection of grace, wisdom, goodnesse, and Mercy. It is the gemme or Diamond

mond in a ring, that makes it very precious and beautifull; so it is the grace, that God hath treasured up in Christ, which makes him so glorious, so attractive, and so alluring as he is.

Secondly, Christ is attractive in his graces bestowed upon the Saints. As a Father is dignified by having a worthy sonne, and a School-master by the learning and proficiency of his Scholars: so is Christ by the Graces of his people. A Master is honoured by his livery, which his servants wear: now the graces of love, and humility, and meeknesse, and patience, and the like, are, as I may say, Christs livery, by which wee are distinguished, and known to be his servants: and he is much honoured by those badges: *By this shall all men know (saith Christ) that you are my Disciples, if you love one another. Joh. 13.35.* The holy lives and blessed examples of the Saints are very fruitful; they advance the Kingdome of Christ, and are very attractive things to tole and draw on others to a liking of his wayes. *Ye wives (saith the Apostle) be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be wonne by*

by the conversation of the wives, while they behold your chaste, or modest conversation, coupled with feare, 1 Pet. 3. 1. 2. Not that the examples even of the best can convert a sinner; for that is done onely by the preaching of the Gospel; but they may do this; they may shew a sinner the vilenesse and the danger of his own way; because they be Light; they may also allure him and draw him on to approve of the holy wayes of Christ, and to prepare him to heare that word, which is of power to beget faith, and to save the soul. And hither tends that of the Prophet *Hosea*, 14. 7. *They that dwell under his shadow shall return, they shall revive, as the corn, and grow as the vine: the sent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon*: The meaning of it is this, that *Ephraim* being converted, others that dwell under his shadow, beholding his wayes, and approving them, shall return: he shall cast forth such a sweet savour of holy conversation, that others not yet wrought upon, shall revive as the corn after the dead winter, flourish like the vine, and give a sent as fragrant and delightfull, as the wine of *Lebanon*. The graces then of the Saints do very much decorate

decorate and adorn Christ himself. As a fair and beautifull woman, virtuous, and holy, is a credit to her husband; so are the godly to Christ: they are his Spouse, they are his Members, they are his Children, they are his Servants, they are his Scholars; and therefore whatsoever is excellent and commendable in them, it redounds to his praise. They be branches of his planting, and the worke of his hands, and he is glorified in them, as the Prophet speaks: If the visible heavens do declare the glory of God, as the Psalmist saith; how much more then, doe the new heavens, I meane the new creature, the persons of men new-moulded and formed in holinesse and righteousness to the similitude and likenesse of God; how much more, I say, doe these declare the glory of Christ, whose handy-work they are? Hence is that saying of the Apottle; *If our Brethren be enquired of; they are the messengers of the Churches and the glory of Christ*, 2 Cor. 8. 23. And in another place he saith, that *Christ presents his Church to himselfe a glorious Church*: The glory of the Church reflects upon Christ, who first founded and formed it.

Every

Eph. 5. 27.

Every childe of God at his conversion *puts on Christ*; whence it followeth, that whatsoever beauty and comelinesse the Saints have, it is Christs beauty and comelinesse; and he hath the praise of it. Thus you see, that Christ is very attractive in his love, in his beauty, and in his graces, both his own and his Saints; therefore he must needs be very precious.

There is one Reason more, which *Feas. 7.* may not be omitted: Christ is precious to Beleevers from that evidence of interest, right, and propriety, that they have in him. Much hath been said of his peerlesse and unparallel'd excellency: but what were all, if to himselfe alone, and not to us? What is all the gold of the *Indies* to me, if I my selfe languish in proverty? What are the feasts and full feeding of others to mee, if I my self starve for hunger? or what is all the help in the world to mee, if I cannot have it at my need? Here then is the *ultima lima*, (as I may say) and the complement of all, that Christ is every way excellent, and the Saints enjoy him as their own; they have a comfortable interest.

The preciousness of Christ

In all his workes and performances.

In all his dignities and honours.

In all his offices and administrations.

In all his blessed influences and graces.

First, all Christs workes and performances, are in a peculiar respect for every Beleever; his making of the world, setting of policies and governments, rooting up of Kingdomes, executing of judgements in the earth, rewarding some, and punishing others, raising up wise, learned, valiant, active, just and mercifull men in their times: in all these, and in all other general and providentiall workes of Christ, the beleeving soul hath a kind of interest & propriety: next unto his own glory, Christ aimed at the good of his Church in all these things, and hath still either immediately, or in the upshot and close of all made them instrumentall for her welfare: in which sense are those words of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 3. 21. 22. All things are yours, (saith he) whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.*

Secondly, Believers have a kinde of claim also in the dignities and honours of

of Christ. There is a reciprocation (as I may say) between him and his Saints: they are mutually and interchangeably glorified in one another: as Christ is glorified in them, Joh. 17, 10. so they are unspeakeably dignified and graced by him. *The glory of children (saith Salomon) are their Fathers*, Prov. 17. 6. If the Father be heroicall, or learned, or any way excellent, this is the sonnes glory, unless he degenerate: now the Saints are called the *seed and the children of Christ*: whatsoever therefore he excels in, it is their dignity, and their glory. Besides, Christ doth impart of his honours to them, making them like himself. Is Christ a sonne, and heire of all? so are they sonnes, and heires, and co-heires with Christ: shall he judge the world? so shall they in some sort: doth he breake in pieces the Nations with a rod of iron? so do they: is he ascended into glory? so shall they ascend: There is not any whit of his glory, unless it be that which is utterly incommunicable, but they have a touch of it, if I may so speak: yea and that which is so incommunicable, redounds to their glory, as you heard before.

Thirdly,

The preciousness of Christ

Thirdly, Beleevers have interest in the offices of Christ. Every Saint may say of Christ, he is my Prophet and Teacher, he is my Priest and reconciler, he is my King and governour: yea the godly have such an interest in these offices of Christ, that virtue comes out of him to make even them Prophets, and Priests, and Kings also: Prophets in some measure, to teach themselves and others, Priests to offer spirituall sacrifices, acceptable to God by Christ; and Kings to rule over their own lusts and corruptions.

Lastly, Beleevers have also interest in the graces of Christ: he, that hath the field, hath also the treasure, that is hid in it. It was the greatest consolation and joy of the Spoule, that shee could say, *My beloved is mine*. All that is in Christ, a Beleever may appropriate to himself; he may say with unspeakable delight, his riches, his love, his goodness, his greatnesse, his power, and all that is his, is mine. I have interest in all those transcendent graces of his; his mercy, his truth, his promises, they are all mine. Now this must needs render Christ very precious, when he is not only

onely in himself, whatsoever is excellent and desirable: but also the Saints may justly challenge and claim him for their own.

I come now to the application of the Point. And first of all, it shews us the reason, why the most in the world do despise Christ, and care not for him; namely, because they have no faith; they are infidels and unbelievers; and therefore they set light by him. Christ is very precious; but it is onely to Believers: worldlings have no faith; and therefore Christ seems a despicable and worthless thing to them. Now that they have no faith, this appears

First, by their ignorance. Most have not so much as the theory, or doctrinal knowledge of Christ: they are like *Festus*, who told *Agrippa*, that *Paul's* adversaries had questions against him concerning one *Jesus*, Act. 25. 19. So let these be asked, and they can answer nothing truly, nothing rationally, nothing punctually of Christ. Christ is to them (as *Logicians* speak) an *Individuum vagum*, *quidam homo*, a certain man, one *Jesus*; but they for their part know little of him; onely they have a wild hope, that

if he be good for any thing, they shall have a share in it, as well as others: and therefore, Jesus Christ have mercy on us, is a frequent and high point of their devotion: they have it by tradition to receive Christ: but what he is, and how made ours, they know not.

Others there be, that have pretty store of knowledge; they can reason and discourse of Christ distinctly and satisfactorily; but they have no experimental knowledge of him; they have not felt the work of his Spirit upon their hearts; they have not tasted how gracious the Lord is: they may perhaps have a flashie relish and light tast of him; such as theirs is, of whom the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* Temporary gusts & apprehensions of Christ's sweetness, causing joy for a while; but they do not sit down with Christ at his table to eat even to saturation (as I may say) and to make a full meal of his spiritual dainties, the heavenly Manna, the marrow of fatness: neither have they drunk abundantly (as the charge is, *Cantic. 5. 1.*) of wine on the lees, well refined out of Christ's wine-cellar. In a word, they have not a thorough and saving experience of Christ: though their

their brains have some print of him, yet their hearts are strangers to him: and therefore they have no faith: *They that know Christ's name, will put their trust in him*, Psal. 9. 10. But these know it not: they know not the power, they know not the vertue, they know not the worth of Christ; neither do they know their own misery without him. And what faith can there be, where there is no knowledge? Knowledge is so necessary to breed and beget faith, that sometimes it includes faith, and faith bears the name of it, as *Esa. 53. 11. By his knowledg shall my righteous servant justify many*: and again, *Not having mine own righteousness* (saith the Apostle) *which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection*, Phil. 3. 9, 10. That is one token then that men have no faith, because they have no knowledge.

Secondly, It appears by their stumbling at Christ, Christ is a *stone of stumbling*, and a *rock of offence* to the disobedient, as the Apostle saith: and disobedient ones are opposed to believers; un-

belief is the greatest disobedience in the world; 'tis to make God a liar, and it is the mother and dam of all other disobedience: because men believe not; therefore they are so vicious, so prophane, so ungodly, and so disobedient as they are: and therefore it is that Christ seems so vile and so base to them as he doth: therefore it is, that they are offended with him, and stumble at him: overmuch hast makes a man to stumble: now the Prophet saith, that *he which believeth shall not make hast*. Esa. 28. 16. Had the *Jews* believed, they had never stumbled at Christ; his poverry and depressed condition had never been any scandal to them; but they not believing, looked for a Saviour and a Messias that should come in the riches, in the glory, in the pomp and magnificence of an earthly Monarch; which when it failed, they were offended, and said, *We will not have this man to reign over us*. The Prophet *Esay* brings forth carnal people speaking thus of Christ; *He hath no form, nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him*, Chap. 53. 2. This is not meant of the bodily visage and countenance

nance of Christ; but of the strict laws of his Kingdom, and of the hard terms upon which he offers himself: he tells men, that if they will be his followers, and will have him for a Saviour, then they must deny themselves, renounce their own wils, take up his Cross, suffer mocks and reproaches, bonds and imprisonment, be hated and persecuted in the world, and resist even to blood and loss of life, if need be. These are the termes & conditions upon which Christ offers himself: and these are very unsavory, most cannot relish them, they will not down: Christ is very offensive being so tendred; without form, without comeliness, without beauty, a most nauseous and loathsome object. Now where it is thus, it is evident, that men have no faith: a man will not rest or rely upon that, which he hath no good conceit of.

Thirdly, It appears to be so also, when men do not improve Christ. True faith is a growing thing, and makes all other graces to grow; it is not idle and lazie, but active and advancing, and still preising forward. What is ground, if not goodded and manured?

What is a Ship, if not rigged, and sent to Sea? What is a trade, if not driven, and made use of? So what is Christ, if not working, not acting, not improved in us? What is his incarnation, death, resurrection, intercession, if we receive no virtue, or vigorous impress, no accession or augmentation from them? The business of Christ in a soul is not a matter of words and names, as *Gallio* thought: but it is a work of the highest and greatest concernment, that can be; The aims of it are above all created excellencies: and therefore where it is true and not fained, it is ever in agitation, ever girding forward to the mark, ever building, ever running, ever growing: if not so, it is manifest that men have no faith: and if they have no faith, it is no wonder, that they should despise Christ.

Fourthly, When a man is careless and regardless of the things of Christ, this is also an argument of a faithless and unbelieving soul, *Phil.* 2. 20, 21. The Apostle opposes *Timothy* (whom elsewhere he commends for his unfained faith) unto such careless ones; *I have no man like minded* (saith he) *who will naturally*

naturally care for your State; for all seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But how doth he mean it? Did Timothy care for the *Philippians* as a natural man? No; but as one that was by faith implanted into Jesus Christ, and so had a new nature: and by the motions and inclinations of that new nature, he did as indearedly and affectionately tender the good state of the *Philippians*, as parents do naturally care for their children. By this Antithesis then, or opposition, it appears, that those who sought their own privacies, and not the things of Jesus Christ, had no faith. They might perhaps, and did in all likelihood make profession of the faith: but not regarding the community and publike good of the Saints, it is evident, that all their Religion was but a vain and empty flourish, a meer shuk or shadow, without heart, without life, without truth and substance of grace: had they been truly of the body of Christ, they would have had more publike spirits, and considered others, as well as themselves: So writes the Apostle; *The members have the same care one for another,* 1 Cor. 12. 25. And this was

his own practice, *I shall please men in all things* (saith he) *not seeking mine own profit; but the profit of many, that they may be saved*, 1 Cor. 10. last. And in the very same Chapter he gives in precept, that *no man should seek his own, but every man anothers wealth*. I confess, that both these sayings of his do offer some hold for cavil and exception: as where he saith, that *he pleased all men in all things*; it may seem that he was then a flatterer, and a time-server; but yet we must not so understand it; for he intends it, no question, of his care not to give offence to any, as appears by the context. And again whereas he saith, *Let no man seek his own, but every man anothers wealth*; we must not conceive, that he doth enjoin self-neglect; but onely he gives a charge against self-love, to wit, that no man should so seek his own, as wholly to neglect the benefit of others, and especially their spiritual benefit: yet thus it is with many in the world, who notwithstanding make a glorious shew of better things: let the cause of Christ, let his Church and people sink or swim, tis all one to them; like Gallio they care for no such matters.

Eli's

Eli's heart trembled when he heard, that the Arke of God was taken; but let newes of the ill success of the Saints come to these, and it never troubles them: they will make some shew of sorrow with their tongues; but there is not a whit in their hearts. Now certainly, here can be no faith. 'Tis the right guise of Infidels, to call the Church an *out-cast*, and to say, *This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after*, Jer. 30. 17.

"*Josephus* * writes, that *Solomon* was * Antipu;
 "not so intent and earnest in building *lib. 8. c. 2.*
 "of his own palace, as he was in the
 "structure of the Temple; because the
 "one was for God; but the other for
 "Kings. Clean contrary to which was
 the practice of those, that *dwelt in their*
seeled houses, and let the house of God lie
wast, Hag. 1. 4. Doubtlesse, where there
 is such slighting of God, and of his people,
 and such intensitive care of private
 concernments, there can be no faith.
 As a man beleeves, so he cares for the
 things of Christ.

Fifthly, When men procrastinate and
 delay their seeking of Christ, putting off
 this great and necessary work from day
 to day, giving the prime, the morning,
 and

and the virginity of their affections (as I may say) to the world, prostituting their precious souls to such base, vile, and worthless things: this is also a sign of a faithless heart, and consequently, that Christ is little set by. *You cannot serve God and Mammon*, saith our Saviour, *Mat. 6. 24.* *Mammon* is a Rabinical word, signifying plenty of riches and worldly wealth: some say it comes from *man*, a multitude: now as Beleevers dilating upon the copious theme of the love of Christ, do as it were lose their hearts and affections in the bottomless depth of his unsearchable riches and grace: so worldlings do in like manner ingurgitate and drown their spirits in the endless and unsatiable desire of worldly riches and pleasures: and when they thus serve *Mammon*, how can they do the worke of God, to beleeve on him, whom he hath sent? *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, that is, the inordinate desire of earthly pleasures, and riches, and honours; these are of the world, as the Apostle saith: and we all know, that the world and the Elect are *è regione* (as wee say) diametrically opposite and contrary one to

to the other : and if so , then certainly where there are those lusts and inordinate desires , there can be no faith ; for faith is proper to the Elect ; and therefore it is called *the faith of God's Elect* , Tit. 1. 1. Neither will it serve the turn for men to say within themselves , as many do , that there will be time enough to seek Christ hereafter : for the present it will be best to follow after pleasures , and to pursue the world ; when gray haire , and old age comes , then 'twill be rathe enough to look after God , after Christ , after grace ; certainly , this is a most desperate resolution ; for know assuredly , that though many seem to seek Christ in the twilight (as I may say) and evening of their lives ; yet in the upshot and close of all he is not found : though men seem to leave their sinnes , when they be old ; yet for the most part , it is not so ; but rather sinne leaves them ; for were they young and lusty , as they have been , they would be as forward to act it , as ever. Now where there is no seeking , nor receiving of Christ , there cannot be any faith at all.

Sixtly , When men can sit down contented

tented and satisfied without Christ, never miss him, never feelee the want of him; this doth also argue a state of unbelief. Every true Beleever makes Christ the center and rest of his soul. All things tend naturally to their proper place, as light things upward, and heavy things downward: so the nature of faith is to flie up unto Christ, who is (as is may say) the bosome of perfect rest and repose. Those that have been most eminent for faith, could never endure the absence of Christ: they have still borne it very impatiently, very eagerly and discontentedly. The Church professes her selfe to be *sicke of love for him*, *Cantic. 2. 5. Davids soul panted after him, as the hunted or chased Hart doth after the water-brooks.* And the people of God say, *The desire of our soul is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soule have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within mee will I seek thee early,* *Esa. 26. 8. 9.* Now, I must tell you, that is was faith, which caused such love sickness in the Spouse, such panting and thirsting in *David*, and such soul-desires, such incessant seeking of Christ in those godly ones, that we
read

reade of: *Give me children, or else I dye* said *Rachel*: so certainly nothing can quiet and content the mind of a Believer, but union and communion with Christ. It argues then a dead, dark, a hopeless, a faithless condition, when the soul can go whole months and years, pleasing it self with rattles and toys, as I may say; and never labour for sweet intercourse or commerce with Christ: at the very best here can be no better, than a divided esteem of Christ, which is nothing worth. When the heart is divided between Christ and the world, there is alwaies a disproportion: the world hath most, and Christ least: yea even then, when Christ seems to have most; yet it is but occasionall: dangers, fears, the sick bed, a spirit of bondage, stings of conscience, and the like, may perhaps make Christ most relishable for a spirt; but when the fit or storm is over, and God gives respite; then the heart is hardened like *Pharaohs*, and there is a returning *with the dogg to his vomit*, and *with the washed Sow to wallowing againe in the mire*. It is possible for a man to esteem of Christ meerly for ease; he would be freed from anguish,

1 Pet. 2.
22.

guish, but not from sinne; he would be eased of the burden of sinne, I mean those horrors, and terrors, and wounds, and affrightments, which it workes: he would be delivered from pain, and the hell of sinne, but he cares not to be purged from the impurity and filthinesse of it. Now where Christ is welcome and accepted onely for such an end, as this, truly he counts himselfe to be but little set by: such an esteeme of Christ is but an occasionall esteeme of him, a divided esteeme, and a disproportionable esteeme, which he doth nothing esteeme of: and it declares a soul quite destitute of faith: and Christ cannot be precious where there is no faith.

Use 2.

Secondly, Here is discover'd to us a fit object whereupon to spend the marrow of our best affections; wee should labour to place all our sweet affections that are to be exercised upon good, as love, joy, and delight, upon this love-deserving object Christ. It is pittie we should lose so much of our affections, as we do upon worldly things: when we suffer a pure stream to run through a dirty channell, our affections to run after the things of the world, we do but lose

lose our affections, and they become unprofitable unto us.

I confess, that the love of Christ is not alike in all the Saints, some are more, and some less intensive in their love to Christ. Wee all know, that in the naturall body, there is not so much strength in a finger, as there is in the arm: so in the mysticall body of Christ, the members have not all of them the like measures, and abilities of grace. And it is possible also to sleep spiritually, while the heart, that is to say, the life and inmost affection of the soul, is waking. *I sleep* (saith the Spouse) *but my heart waketh*, Cant. 5. 2. The meaning is, that she was somewhat secure, and kept not that watch against the pleasures of this life, and the baits of this world, as she should do: and yet her heart was upright still. So the wise Virgins slumbered and slept, as well as the foolish, *Mat. 25. 5.* And yet they had *oyle in their Lamps*, and were ready to go in with the bridegroom. *The spirit may be willing, when the flesh is weak*, as our Saviour saith. Nevertheless, it were to be wished, that every childe of God had heavenly affections in him at the height, and like an
arrow

arrow drawn up to the head : And we must take heed, that our pusillity and dwarfishnesse in them do not flow from a vicious and adulterate love : love of the world, love of ease, love of any thing more, than Christ. Many of Gods dear ones are not without some tincture of this; they have, at it were, fits of it sometimes, as we may see by those excuses, which the Spouse makes, when Christ did knock at the door of her heart for entrance; *I have put off my coat (saith she) how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* Cant. 5. 3. 'Tis a Metaphor taken from those that are gone to bed, and are loath to rise for any mans pleasure: and the meaning may be this; that she had now shaken off many fears and troubles; she was free from persecution, & delivered from many afflictions and miseries formerly endured; shee had now thrown off these things, as one going to bed doth his garments; shee had washt them off; as in the Eastern Countries travellers were wont to wash off the soile of their feet, when they went to their rest; and she was now in the bed of fleshly ease and worldly contentment, loath to disrest her selfe;

loath

loath to rise, and to be pinch't with cold again, loath to set her feet into the dirt of former sufferings: though in her heart she preferr'd Christ above all; yet so sweet were those earthly accommodations, that she would rather forbear intercourse with him for a while, than lose her share in them. Thus it was with her: but this was a naughty temper, and cost her dear to be purg'd of it. The true and healthful temper of the soul is, when Christ is a joy to us, even in the absence and want of all other things; when we can say with the Prophet; *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom; neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail; and the fields shall yeeld no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold; and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation,* Habac. 3. 17, 18.

Thirdly, This may discover unto us, what singular effects the excellency of Christ have upon the hearts of Believers; and how eminently their affections are drawn out toward him. We may judg of our esteem by our affections, and chiefly by the affection of love.

N

Love

Love is the height of our esteem, and there are in it these three acts, or effects, viz.

1. Complacency, or well-pleasedness.
2. Desire of union, or enjoyment.
3. Benevolence, or good will.

First, Complacency, or well-pleasedness, being referred to Christ, is an affection whereby we do approve and like of all that is in him, resting in his goodness, as in the most lovely and desirable object in the world. *Thy love is better, than wine* (saith the Church) *because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the Virgins love thee*, Cant. 1. 2, 3.

This Scripture shews what a pleasing and delightful object, Christ is to a believing soul. What more acceptable to taste, than fragrant wine? Christ is far more to a Believer. What more pleasing to the smell, than sweet ointments of an exquisite composition? Christ is the same, and far sweeter to the heart of a believer. The judgment the Church hath of the love of Christ is, that it far excells all the pleasures and delights of the world, synecdochically signified by wine, one pleasant species or kind for all

all the rest : and *his Name*, that is, the knowledge of him, by preaching of the Gospel, is powred out like odoriferous ointment, to the unspeakable delight of the Saints, drawing and ravishing the minds of them that hear it, as virgins are drawn with the offer of some lovely Match. Now where Christ is such a pleasing and delightfull object : where the senses of the soul are so exceedingly taken with his sweetness : where there is such a totall acquiescence in Christ, and such a full, absolute, and universal resting in him ; it is most evident and undeniable, that there cannot but be a high and worthy esteem of him. The best of Gods Saints and servants have liked of Christ, coming with a frown, as well as with a smile, with a rod, as well as with tender and sweet embracings : though there hath been some reluctancy in the flesh, and averseness in nature : yet to the New Man within, to the sanctified and regenerate part, Christ hath been ever welcome, however represented, and in what shape soever he hath offered himself. Indeed Christ hiding, and absenting himself, eclipsing his light, and withdrawing his com-

The preciousness of Christ

fort from the soul; this hath ever been bitter and unsavory to the Saints, and never could they bear it with any patience; because they thought Christ to be utterly lost and gone: they thought Christ to be no Christ: but in other things, though never so tart and unpleasant, Christ hath been acceptable enough: *Lord, if it be thou* (saith Peter) *bid me come unto thee on the water*: so it is with the Saints, they refuse not to venture even upon the boisterous water to go unto Christ: Christ is welcome to them upon any terms: scourging and whipping Christ, as well as stroaking and embracing Christ. When Samuel told Eli of judgements to come upon his family; *It is the Lord* (saith he) *let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. If it be the Lord that doth it, it is no matter, I will bear it. So David, *I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*. And Job; *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* As who should say, God shall be welcome to me any how, bringing good, or bringing evil. Yea, even in spiritual desertions, when Christ hideth his face, and veileth himself from the soul,

Soul, the Saints are enough well-pleased in him : though the tentation be full of amarulency and bitterness : yet in Christ himself there is abundant sweetness and satisfaction : hence was that resolution of *Job* ; *though he kill me, yet I will trust in him.* Hence also it is, that the children of God, though they walk in darkness, and have no Light at all, yet they will trust in the name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God, *Isaiah* 50. 10.

Though some weak ones doubt of this and call it into question; and therefore are sometimes in fits of despair : yet the more exercitate of the Saints; those among them, that are as beaten and tried souldiers, that cannot be beaten off from the comfortable apprehension of it : and therefore in the depth of darkness and tentation, when Christ hides and turns away his loving countenance, they resolve to wait for better times: I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of *Jacob*, and I will look for him, *Isaiah* 8. 17. and notable to this purpose is that of *Job* : *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward,*

but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand
 where he doth work, but I cannot behold
 him; he hideth himself on the right hand,
 that I cannot see him. Job doth not speak
 thus in respect of the invilible essence
 of God; but in respect of comfortable
 revelations: God hid his cheerfull and
 loving face from him, that which way
 soever he turn'd himself he could not
 behold it. Well, but what doth Job in
 this case? doth he despond? doth he
 let go his hold, and give over his hope?
 no, but he holds fast still, he likes
 Christ well enough still: he knoweth
 (saith he) the way that I take; & when he
 hath tried me, I shall come forth, like gold,
 Job. 33. 8, 9, 10. Job had (as the Apo-
 stle speaks) ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν ἀνδραγαθίᾳ γε-
 γυμνασμένης, by reason of a habit, or
 perfection, he had his senses well exercised,
 or school'd, as the word signifieth, he was
 a man of experience, and experience wor-
 keth hope, as the Apostle saith: and
 therefore in the depth and bottom of
 all his misery Christ was a Light, a
 stay, and a comfort to him. Now
 whence is it, that the Faith and graces
 of the Saints are so impregnable?
 whence is it that their hope is so inde-
 fatigable

Heb. 5. 14.

fatigable and never out of breath? whence is it, that no storms or tempest of tentation can break their spirits, and make them give out, but from that complacency and well pleasedness, from that exceeding swavity and sweetness, that they find in Christ? so that let him present himself, how he will, they are never offended, as to flie off from him, and to give him the slip for ever. *A bundle of Myrrhe* (saith the Church) *is my beloved unto me: he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts, Cant.*

1. 13. *Myrrhe* is very sweet of smell, and *leniter amara*, meanly, or somewhat bitter in tast, as the *naturalist* writeth: so is Christ in this world a kind of a bitter-sweet unto his Saints: but yet his sweetness doth (as I may say) swallow up all his bitterness: his bitterness is in the lowest degree; but his sweetness in the superlative: so that let his dispensations be what they will, his Saints are never weary of him: yea they take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for his sake: and when they be weak in themselves, then they are strong in him, and more than Con-

querours, as the Apostle saith.

To conclude, such is the force of that pleasantness and loveliness, that is in Christ, that neither the shame of his own poverty and cross, nor his coming to set fire in the earth, holding forth such a Doctrine, as makes wicked men rage like Devils, and makes his own people to be in the midst of fears and troubles, and Christ himself hiding his face and love from them: such I say, is the force of his pleasantness and amiableness, that none of these bitter things could ever make the Disciples of Christ weary of their profession, or cut off the race and succession of them.

"Antiq.
lib. 18.
cap. 4.

There is a remarkable passage to this purpose "in *Josephus*"; At that time, "saith he (meaning when *Pilate* was "Governour) was *Jesus*, a wise man; if it "be lawfull to call him a man: for he "was the performer of divers admirable works, and the instructor of "those, who willingly entertain the "truth. And he drew unto him divers "Jews, and *Greeks* to be his followers: this was Christ; who being accused by the Princes of our Nation "before

“before *Pilate* , and afterward con-
“demned to the cross by him ; yet did
“not those , who followed him from
“the beginning , forbear to love him
“for the ignominy of his death : for
“he appeared unto them alive the third
“day after , according as the Divine
“Prophet had before testified the same,
“and divers other wonderfull things of
“him. And from that time forward the
“race of Christians , who have derived
“their name from him , hath never
“ceased.

Here you see what an honourable testimony this *Jew* , that was no Christian , gives of Christ and his Disciples : so precious and desirable was he notwithstanding his suffering , notwithstanding all the shame and trouble that came upon his followers for him , that they never would forsake him , neither could the generations of them be rooted out of the Earth unto this day. This is my beloved , and this is my friend ô daughters of *Jerusalem*.

Secondly, from complacency, or well-pleasedness flows another thing in love , viz. a desire of union, or enjoymēt. When the soul eyes a tempting or tickling object,

ject, as I may say, it presently covets the possession and fruition of it : there is by and by a kind of clasping or closing with it, or a strong appetite of peculiarity, or private Interest. Whence

Molinus. it is that the French Divine writeth thus of love. "Love (saith he) is that
 "print of our spirits, whereby it join-
 "eth it self unto objects. That which
 "is weight in heavy things, love is the
 "very same in our soules : for as weight
 "moveth earthly bodies toward the
 "place of their rest : so love moveth our
 "soules toward that object, which pro-
 "misseth rest and contentment. Now
 Believers highly esteeming Christ, de-
 sire nothing more than the possession and
 enjoyment of Christ. Now Christ is en-
 joyed.

In his Ordinances.

In his secret and sweet appear-
 rances to the soul, and in his personal
 presence.

First, Christ is enjoyed in his Ordi-
 nances. The Ordinance is (as I said be-
 fore) a walk wherein Christ is wont
 to meet with his people : a Beleever
 therefore doth with great delight and
 study put himselfe upon that way, that
 he

he may enjoy Christ in it, But

Secondly, Christ is enjoyed in his secret and sweet appearances to the soul. What are all holy Ordinances, but dead and heart-less things without such revelations?

Job tells us of Ordinances of Heaven; and *Jeremiah* in like manner of the Ordinances of the Sun, of the Moon, and of the Starrs: these are naturall Ordinances: but to what purpose were they; if this inferiour world did not partake of their light and heat, and sweet influence? Wee read also of Politick and Judiciall Ordinances, which God constituted and set in the common-wealth of *Israel*: but to what purpose were these likewise, or what benefit could an Israelite reap by them, if he lived in such corrupt and lawless times, that he could not have them administred? so what are all heavenly and sacred Ordinances to a Beleever; if he find not the vertue, the life, and the power of them, enjoying Christ in the Ordinance, and finding an influence of his spirit and grace flowing in upon his soul? As there is a desire in a Beleever to communicate his heart unto Christ; so Christ commu-

communicates his grace unto a Beleevers heart. Christ as a Fountain, sends forth his streames of comfort and joy : and as a Sun , sends forth his glorious beames of grace and love into a Beleevers soul. Now a Beleever doth account prayer , preaching, Sacraments, and all other means of his souls welfare to be nothing ; unless the Spirit of Christ comply with them , flowing in upon the soul with such heart-ravishing discoveries of his grace , as no tongue can possibly expresse. Hence it is, that a Beleever sets open the windowes of his soul , desiring that Christ may shine into it , with the bright and glorious beams of his grace and favour ; but if Christ eclipse and hide himselfe from the soul , there is nothing but darkness and complaining , sorrow and mourning , and no rest at all ; untill the mist be dispelled , and the cloud blowen over , and the day-starre arise in the heart again ; untill Christ come and refresh the soul with new supplies of revelations. The Church never left off seeking Christ ; untill she had found him ; till the King had brought her into his bed-chamber , and into the banqueting-

queting-house, and imparted some of his love unto her. Oh how precious is that sweet and secret communion, which a Beleever enjoys with Christ ! ô ! what a delight is it to sit under Christs shadow, and to enjoy him in such a way, as this is ?

Thirdly, Christ is enjoyed in his personal presence at his second coming. The Saints are described to be such, as long and look for Christs appearing, 1 Cor. 1. 7. *you come behind in no gift* (saith the Apostle) *waiting for the coming ἀποκάλυψιν, revelation of Iesus Christ.* It is called the *revelation of Christ*, because the glory and Majesty of Christ it now hid ; but then his brightness shall appear and be manifested ; for he shall come in the clouds and great glory. And the Apostle saith in 1 Thess. 2. 10. that *Christ shall be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe*, that is, the Saints seeing themselves to shine as the Starrs for evermore, and to be made conformable to the glorious body of Christ, they shall infinitely admire his grace and Mercy unto them. Hence it is, Believers wait for the consolation of the second coming

ing of Christ, as they did for the consolation of his first coming; because here they receive good in promise, but then they shall receive it in the fruit of the promise: here they receive the first fruites of his Spirit, then a full harvest of joy and blessedness: here they see Christs glory at a distance, and through the lattess, but then in the luster and brightness of it; Christ is the object of a Believers affections, and nothing but fruition will give him satisfaction: his heart is never at rest, untill it come to his proper place of rest and repose; agreeable to that of the Father, *fecisti nos Domine ad te, & inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescit in te*, thou hast made us o Lord for thy self, and our heart is never at rest, till it rest in thee. Now whence is it, that a Believer desires to enjoy Christ in his Ordinance, in that sweet and secret communion, in his personal presence, but from this love of union: when he sees such a glorious object, as Christ is, he desires to claspe and close with it.

Thirdly, from complacency, or wel-pleasednesse, and from union and enjoyment flowes a third thing in love,
viz.

viz. Benevolence or good-will. Benevolence being referred to Christ, is an affection whereby wee do yeeld our selves wholly unto him, desiring his name may be glorified by us. The Saints cannot properly conferr any essential goodness, or glory upon Christ; but onely make an agnition and acknowledgement thereof. *Can a man (saith Job) be profitable unto God. is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? Job 22. 2.* that is, if a man were just and holy, yet he could not profit God or add any joy and delight unto him. Again in *Psalme 16. 3. Thou art my Lord (saith David) my goodness extendeth not to thee*: that is, I cannot enlarge and enrich God; but (saith he) *to the Saints on Earth*, in whom is my delight; that is, as for those that bear thy stamp and superscription upon them, I will entertain with my goods: thus we way wish well to Christ in his members.

Again, this love of benevolence doth carry and contain in it a willingness to yield all obedience unto Christ. He that loves Christ freely, cannot but study to please him in all things, and be-
like

like unto him, 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. And he that keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfect, 1 *Joh.* 2. 5.

Love is the condescending to the lowest service, it is impulsive and constraining, it hath a sweet kind of violence to draw the heart of a Believer unto the obedience of Christ: so saith the Apostle, *the love of Christ constrains us*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. And so in *Cant.* 8. 6. *Love is strong as death, and Jealousy is cruel as the grave.* That is, love is that strong affection which cannot be subdued by trouble or temptation; it is as strong as death: the heart (as some say) is *primum vivens, & ultimum moriens*, the first living, and last dying, and therefore all the vitals of the body draw to the heart, and unite there; whence it is a man gives such strong plunges at his death, because his strength is united: so love doth unite all the affections of a Believer drawing them forth to act for Christ: and for zeal or jealousy, that is, love enflamed and fervent, and it is fierce and inexorable as Hell, and the grave: that as Death and Hell devoureth, and swallows up all; so love to Christ overcometh

cometh all opposition and suffering, and makes Believers *rejoyce, to fill up* (that is declaratively) *the suffering and affliction of Christ.* Col. 1.24.

Fourthly, the unmatched excellency, and preciousness of Christ must not lye as a condemned thing: but it calls for the utmost strength of our souls, and the height of our affections to be fixed upon it. There is no object in the world, but there is a Will relating to it, and inclinable to close with it. Now what better object can the Will of man have, than Christ? If we be not here, what do we differ from beasts? and a beast in the shape of a man is worst of all. 'Tis good for us, that God hath placed affections of love, of joy, of desire, and the like in our souls: but if these be not placed upon Christ also, it were better that we were quite without them, and were as incapable of Christ, as the most insensible and unreasonable creatures that are. Let us consider then what may yet farther elevate our affections, and cause them to mount up with wings as Eagles unto that delight of all delights, and abstract of all praises. This will be, if we look
 O upon

The preciousness of Christ

upon those rich and costly gifts, which Christ hath bestowed upon Believers, and they are such as these, viz.

Precious Blood.

Precious Graces.

Precious Promises.

Precious Love.

Precious Spirit.

Precious Priviledges.

The blood of Christ is precious in these respects.

Mot. 1. First, from the purity of his humane nature, which was *holy, harmeless, undefiled and separate from sinners*: to God, to man, and to it self it was wholly without spot and blemish, and had not the least touch of sinfulness in it. In nature, the best constitutions have the best blood: never was there a better tempered, a more purely constituted nature, farther from the corruptions, freer from the pollutions and gross humours of sin, than Christ was. It behoved him, as man to *fulfill all righteousness*, and throughly to come up to the patern of Legal types; which did all shadow him absolutely holy, and speak him perfectly pure without the least tainture of spiritual defilement.

Now

Now if the blood of the Saints, who are but in part sanctified, (dregs of sin remaining in the best,) be precious in Gods account, as we read, *Isa. 116. 15.* how much more then is the blood of the Son of God precious, who never went awry, never failed in the least jot, or tittle of due obedience to the Law of God? The Apostle saith, *for a good man peradventure some would even dare to dye, Rom. 5. 7.* and why so? but because 'tis great pity such precious blood should be lost: now if their blood be so precious, that are but imperfectly good, what then was his, who was good without any mixture of evil?

Secondly, Christs blood was noble blood, and therefore precious. He came of the race of Kings, as touching his manhood: but being withal the Son of God, this renders his nobility matchless and peerless. 'Twas *Pharaoh's* brag, that he was the *Son of antient Kings*, *Isaiah 19. 11.* Who can lay claim to this more, than Christ? who can challenge this honour before him? he is the Son of the antientest King in the world: he was begot a King from all eternity; and the blood of Kings is precious;

precious: ~~thou art worth ten thousand of~~ us, said David's Subjects to him; and therefore they would not suffer him to hazard himself in the battel, 2 Sam. 18. 3. his Life-bloud was of more value, than if half of his people had perished, because he was King and had the Sovereignty: the nobleness of his person did set a high rate upon his bloud; and whom doth this Argument more commend unto us, than Christ?

Thirdly, the bloud which Christ shed for his people, was his life-bloud. Life is the most precious thing that a man hath. As the life of God is the sum of all his attributes: so the life of man doth eminently contain in it all other blessings: all that he hath serves to maintain it: it is the end and drift of all his enjoyments. What could Christ do more, than to spend his heart-bloud, and to lay down his life for us? *Sanguis est vehiculum vite*, saith the Physician: the bloud is the Chariot of life: yet Experience teacheth, that there may be great effusion of bloud, and yet no death following, Had Christ almost emptyed all his veins, and not dyed, this

this would not have reached to our misery: it had not been sufficient to save us from death: even those *ῥοῦβοι αἱματός* drops of blood; which he did sweat in his agony, had nothing availed without death. Death is the sum of the curse due to us: in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death: Christ then dying for us, here was the accomplishment of all his sufferings, and the height of his love towards us: Surely that blood must needs be very precious, which could not be let out, but the vital spirits must follow after it. Those that profess skill in words, do derive *ἄμα*, blood from *ἀΐδω*, which signifieth to burn, or to kindle: whether this be a true Etymology, or not, I will not dispute: the heat that is in the blood of a living creature (if at leastwise in good temper) speaks for it: sure I am, that the blood of Jesus Christ shed for our sins both testifies his ardent and burning love towards us, and requires a like affection in us, the kindling and firing of our love toward him.

Fourthly, the preciousness of Christs blood appears likewise from the per-

sonal union of his manhood with his God-head. The Divine and human natures of Christ subsisting together in one, and the same person, is called an hypostaticall union: properly the word *ὑπόστασις* signifies a placing, or standing under: when the God-head stands under the manhood, and the manhood is taken into the same person with the God-head, this is hypostatical. Now from this marvellous and wonderful union floweth, though not a real communication of properties, yet a promiscuous predication of them, as if they were all alike common and natural to both natures. Hence the manhood is said to be in heaven even while it was circumscribed and compassed with a place on earth, *John* 3. 13. and on the other side; the blood of the humane nature is called the blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. and else where by reason of this union God himself is said to be crucified. Oh how precious was the blood of Christ then! doubtless it had more worth in it, than all the creatures in Heaven and earth, Angels and men, and all the world beside. The uniting and consequently the cooperation and compliance

ance of the impassible Deity in the same person with that soul and body, which suffered, must needs put infinite dignity, and preciousness beyond all account upon the blood of Christ: yet this was not thought too dear for his Saints.

Fifthly, and lastly, the blessed effects of Christs blood is another strong Argument of the inestimable value and price of it. It justifies our persons in the sight of God. It frees us from the guilt, from the punishment and from the power of all sin. It saves us in ἀπο τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης, from that wrath that is to come, 1 Thessalonians I. 10. Wicked people are Light and merry-hearted, and never dream of an after recoming: but there is a thunder shower of Gods wrath to come, which will light heavily upon the heads of unbelieving ones. We are all of us by nature obnoxious to, and involved in this danger, therefore the Apostle useth the words ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς, snatching or pulling us out from the wrath to come: even we of the children of God, we of the Corporation and society of the Saints, we Believers, as well as others

were liable to his wrath: but Christ hath delivered us: this is his tender loving kindness and good will to his Elect.

Again, the blood of Christ obtains eternal redemption for us, *Heb. 9. 12.* whence it is that the Apostle opposes it to Gold and Silver: though these be among the most precious things that the Earth affords; yet being corruptible and transitory, they cannot purchase incorruption and eternity for us. The blood of Christ is the price of our Redemption: *ye are bought with a price*, saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 7. 23.* and a like phrase he uses in the end of the precedent chapter: yet there is neither a Pleonasm in the words, that is to say, a fulness of speech, though that sometimes be Rhetoricall enough: nor impropriety, or unfitness of Language, as if a thing could be bought without a price: though, I confess, the Scripture in some respects doth sometimes speak so: neither is there an Hebraism, whereby words of the same signification are iterated and repeated *ob vehementiam*, to set the matter on, with the greater vehemency and force: but the word price
is

is used κατ' ἐξοχήν to shew the superlative excellency and dignity of the price wherewith the Saints are bought : so that, ye are bought with a price, is as much as to say, ye are dearly bought, 'twas a price with a witness, that was given for you, a price of inestimable value, a price past the number of a man : it cannot be calculated or summed up, it is so infinite, such a rich and exceeding price is the blood of Jesus Christ, costly and chargeable were our souls, that required such a ransom. This is the price wherewith we are bought from the earth, bought out of Hell, and bought into Heaven and everlasting glory. This is the price that redeemeth us from condemnation ; and this is it that cleanseth us from the filth and stain of sinne. This is it that purgeth our consciences from dead workes to serve the living God, *Heb. 9. 14.* The Apostle in that place draweth an Argument *a minori ad majus*, as the Logician speaks. If typical rites and sacrifices, as the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkled upon the unclean, availed for externall Sanctification, namely, for the purifying of the flesh legally

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gally and ceremonially ; how much more shall the blood of Christ sprinkled upon our consciences, purge away the guilt of sinne, and avail to the internal, spiritual, and everlasting sanctifying of our persons.

Again, by this blood it was that Christ, as the high Priest of our profession, that is of Christians, entered into Heaven : so saith the Apostle, *Heb. 9. 12. Christ entered by his owne blood into the holy place* : he did not enter into the presence of God as the high-priest of old did with the blood of Goats, and Calves : what should those slender things do in the Tabernacle made without hands ? there are no such mean and poore offerings there. Neither did Christ enter to offer for himself, as well as for his Family, as *Aaron* did, *Levit. 16. 6.* he had no need of expiation himself : but he went into the holiest to offer for his people only : whom he hath for ever washed, justified and sanctified *not with blood of others* (as the Apostle speaks) *but with his own blood.*

Lastly, from the precious blood of Christ, we also that are so cleansed and purged

purged have boldness to enter into the holiest, Heb. 10. 19. 20. The blood of Christ breeds us and begets us this confidence. The Apostle in that place doth covertly oppose the liberty of Christians unto the restraint of them that lived under the Law. The *Jewes* of old might not pass into the Holy of Holies : it was lawfull only for the High-Priest to enter into it, and that but once a year. Gr at in this regard is our pre-eminence now above Gods antient people : they might not pass so much as into an earthly Sanctuary inclosed with material walls, and coped with a roof : but we have licence and leave to enter into a far more holy and undefiled place. Christ hath consecrated or initiated a way for us : he hath trod the path first as our fore-runner ; and he hath done it by his blood, or as (the Apostle speaks) *through the vail, that is to say, his flesh* : he alludes to the vail of blew and purple scarlet and fine twined linen, which was to divide the holiest of all from the rest of the Tabernacle. That vaile was a type of Christs flesh. Now as the High-priest of old entered into the holiest by removing of the vail

veile: so Christ by the death of his body did, as it were, turn aside the veil, and so hath entred into heaven, the Holy of Holies, there to make intercession for us. Yea by the renting and tearing of that veil of his flesh upon the cross, he hath for ever opened a way for all Believers: a new and a living way: that of old is obsolete and vanished, this is such, as the vigour thereof shall never decay: that of old being by the blood of Beasts, could not give life to the comers, this being by the blood of Christ, revives and raises up them that are dead in trespasses and sinnes, and doth also conferre eternall life upon them. O how precious, beyond all thought and conceit is the blood of Jesus Christ? the blood of a most righteous person, most noble blood, the very life and heart-blood, the blood of God, justifying, sanctifying, redeeming blood; blood purchasing eternall redemption for us, blood that quickeneth us, and conferres both spiritual and everlasting life upon us. Lastly, Blood that opens to us a never decaying way into Heaven. How precious, I say, is this blood of Christ? and how doth it call upon us to stirr

up

up our affections to embrace Christ, to lay hold of him, and to love him with a most ardent and unfained love, who hath bestowed such a precious gift upon us?

Secondly, Christ hath bestowed upon Believers precious Graces. Grace is called by the Apostle, the renewing of the Holy-Ghost, and the forming of Christ in us. It consisteth in the rectitude and conformity of our will unto the will of God, and to Christ the absolute patern of all grace and holiness, the image of the invisible God, *the express character of his Fathers brightness: the Sun of righteousness, the morning starr*, most eminently and gloriously above all others; *chiefest of ten thousand* for sweet and gracious deportment. How precious are those qualities of the soul, which come near such a patern, as this? which imitate, resemble, and take after such unmatched beauty? Now all grace is precious, but the Scripture gives that Epithete especially to faith, 2 Pet. I. 1. and that for these Reasons.

First, Because it is the root and womb (as I may say) of all grace; it is

is the inward fountain and principle; from whence all grace flowes; it is the mother grace; it purgeth the conscience, and purifieth the heart; and so breedeth every needfull grace in us. You may see this genealogie or pedigree of grace, notably delineated by the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. There we find that charity, or love, which is the fulfilling of the commandment of God, and a chief grace or Christian virtue, flows from a pure heart; and a pure heart springs from a good conscience; and a good conscience is the off-spring of faith. Faith is the Genetrix and breeder of Grace, as *Eve* was the mother of all mankind. I speake so in respect of an internal principle; for if we regard external causes; the race and genealogie may be stretched farther; as thus, faith comes by hearing of the word of God; the word of God is declared by the mouth of a preacher; and every true Preacher is *ὁυκ ανόθευ*, sent from heaven. But I must speak *ad rhombum*; though there be sundry external efficientes and workers of grace; yet faith is the internal root and principle of it: and that is one reason why it is called precious.

Secondly,

Secondly, it is precious in respect of its Author, which is the Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father draws us unto Christ, *Job. 6. 44.* And hence wee are said to be *θεοδιδοντες*, to be taught of God, and to hear and learn of him. The Son likewise draws us: *draw me; we will run after thee*, saith the Spouse. Christ is both the *Author and the finisher of our faith*, *Heb. 12. 2.* He casts in the first seed of it; and also makes it to persevere: he layes the foundation of it, and brings it up to the roof, as I may say: he makes us first to apprehend him, and then leads us to the end of our faith, which is the salvation of our soules. Whence it is that he is called the *Apostle and high Priest of our profession*: that is, he is the teacher of our faith, and the Captain thereof. Lastly, the Holy-Ghost is likewise the Author of our faith. *No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord* (saith the Apostle) *but by the Holy-Ghost*, *1 Cor. 12. 3.* And in the ninth verse of that Chapter, faith is reckoned among the gifts of the Spirit. Faith then must needs be very precious, having God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy-Ghost for the Author of it.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, Faith is precious in respect of the object thereof, that is to say, the thing upon which it leans, or rests, which is God himself, or God in Christ. God is said to *be in Christ*, *reconciling the world unto himself*, and *not imputing their trespasses unto them.* 2 Cor. 5. 19. Now this is the highest and most excellent object of faith. Christ also as Mediatour is the object thereof. David prayeth, *Lead me unto the rock that is higher than I*, Psal. 61. 2. And the rock that he speaks of is Christ: he is the strong rock on which his Church is built firmly and unmovably. Needs then must faith be precious, while it leans on such a solid and steadfast foundation. Again, the promises are metonymically an object of faith: because they are made unto us in Christ: they are in him as adjuncts in their subject: we rest upon the power and truth of Christ, for the obtaining of that good which is in the promises. *All the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him Amen*, 2. Cor. 1. 20. He is mediate, or in the middle between the promises and us: God makes the promises, and Christ is his pledge and assurance for the accom-

complishment of them : so that faith rests on the promises of God, *mediante Christo*, through the mediation of Christ: and anon you shall see what precious things those promises are : in the mean while, we may conclude even from them likewise, that faith must needs be precious, which hath such precious props and pillars to uphold it, God and Christ, and a sure word of promise, all the wisdom and power of the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, all that they can do to establish and confirm their own word, and that is more than enough.

Lastly, The preciousness of faith appears from the nature, from the effects and workings of it. The nature of it is piously to know, and to affect the things of God : to cleave unto God in Christ, to rest upon him for the obtaining of the promises. Faith joyns us to God, who is our life, in whom the lives of our souls are bound up, as *Jacobs* life was bound up in his darling *Benjamins*. Faith filleth the soul with solace unspeakable, with peace passing all understanding, and with joy everlasting. As blood is in the veins, dispersing it self
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into all parts of the body, so giving life and heat and continual nourishment thereunto: such is faith in the soul; it works upon all the affections; it diffuseth and sheddeth abroad in our hearts the love of God in Christ; it attracts and draws our spirits to delight in nothing more, than in Christ; it entertaineth the soul with feasts of fatted things, and of wines refined; it leadeth it into the *wine-cellar*; it invites us unto those *apples and flagons* of pleasure, which Christ hath prepared: it sweetens the cross; it makes us to rejoyce in tribulation, and that with joy unspeakable and glorious; it works in us a child-like confidence toward God, whereby we approach boldly to him, *crying, Abba, Father*; it carrieth the soul up to heaven, and giveth ravishing sights of God and Christ, and the joys of eternity; it brings us into communion with God, whereby we have most intimate and familiar conference with him; it brings us into his *bed-chamber*, into his galleries of love. In a word, it enlightens, justifies, sanctifies, and saves us for ever; because it lays hold on Jesus Christ, *who is made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness,*

ness, and sanctification, and redemption, as the Apostle saith. O how precious is faith, that hath such wonderful vertues and operations, as these? how precious also are those graces, that flow from it, as love, and the fear of God, and humility, and patience, and the like? But above all the rest, how precious is Jesus Christ, and how highly to be esteemed of, who hath bestowed upon us such precious, such royal, and such rich gifts, as these?

Thirdly, Consider likewise the promises of Christ; these are also exceeding great and precious, as they be called, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises*, saith the Apostle. I confess that by promises he means the effect of the promises, or the things themselves that are promised, which are of no small value and worth; and therefore the promises themselves are of no little weight and moment. This will easily appear, if we consider

- The nature of the promiser.
- The antiquity of the promises.
- And the precious things, which they contain.

The preciousness of Christ

First, God, who hath promised, is by nature wise and powerful, true and unchangeable. God is infinitely wise: he hath a profound reach; his counsels are very deep: even his foolishness is *wiser than men*, as the Apostle saith: and he knows wayes beyond our imagination and capacity, how to bring about his own ends, and to accomplish his promises. He is also almighty to effect and bring to pass his designs: he can do above all that we can either ask or think. And again, he is true and cannot lie, and therefore he is called the *God of Amen* by the Prophet, *Esa. 65. 16*. And lastly, he is unchangeable; he cannot repent: there is no variableness or shadow of turning with him: all these are the *fulcra*, the props and supporters of the promises, on which they stand firm and sure, and cannot fall to the ground. The saying is

Pollicitis dives quilibet esse potest.

Every man can be rich in his promises: even a beggar may be as rich as a King in promises: but all the question and doubt is about the performance of them. Among men it is frequently thus: they are facile and forward in making of promises:

mises: but they are ignorant of the means how to fulfill them; or if they know the way, yet they want power and ability; or if they be both knowing and able, yet they want a will; they have a heart and a heart, as the Scripture speaks: they pretend, what they never intend; The children of men are deceitful upon the ballances: or lastly, though they know how to be as good as their word, though they can do it; yea, though for the present they do really intend what they promise, yet

*Multa cadunt inter calicem supremæque
labra.*

many things fall out between the pot and the lip, as the proverb is; they are fickle and inconstant, well instructed how to play fast and loose, unstable as water, like *Reuben*: and so their promises prove to be nothing worth; perhaps the fault may be in their intellect and understanding: though they be wise to day, yet after a while they may grow fots and fools, and so know not how to steer their course, and to wheel about their purposes; or perchance the default is in their hands: though they be in possibility of performing their pro-

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mises to day, yet to morrow their arms may be cut off, and they are left shiftless; or if not so; yet it may be worse; the fault may lie in their affections; they may be honest now, and after a while dishonest; and so say, and unsay; promise, and change their minds. Thus it is with men oftentimes; but with God it is not so; he knows how to perform his promises; he is able to make them good; and he is most true and faithfull in all his professions: yea he is ever wise, ever powerful, ever true, ever the same, never altered or changed in the least measure: how precious then and sweet are his promises? and how lovely also ought Christ to be, by whom we enjoy them? Thus much of the nature of the Promiser.

Secondly, Consider the antiquity of the promises. The main and chief promise of God is that which concerneth eternal life, and this was made at the beginning of the world unto *Adam*, when God said, that *the seed of the woman should break the Serpents head*: yea it was made before the world began, *Tit. 1. 2. In hope of eternal life* (saith the Apostle) *which God that cannot lie, promised*

*mis*ed before the world began. Here by the way we learn, that the promise being before all time, it must needs be absolute and without all condition. But let that pass. The question is to whom that so ancient a promise was made? when there was yet no world, nor any men created to receive it, to whom did God make it? I answer, that it was made to him that even then was ordained to be our head and Mediatour, even the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. The Elect are called the *seed of Christ*, Esa. 53. 10. and *his children*, Heb. 2. 13. Now as we were in *Adams* loyns when he transgressed: so as touching the decree and counsel of God, we were (as I may say) in the loyns of Christ from all eternity, and before the world began: and so the promise was made to him for us, or to us in him before all moments or measures of time. But you will ask me perhaps where we find such a promise? I answer, that we have such a promise, *Psal. 2. 7, 8. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and*

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the ends of the earth for thy possession. In this Scripture mark two things.

First, That God the Father saith of his Son, *this day have I begotten thee.* And [this day] signifies both time and eternity. Time, as touching the resurrection of Christ from the dead: that was done in time, as you know; and the Apostle applyes the words of the *Psalmist* unto that very matter of Christ's resurrection, *Acts* 13. 33. And to the same purpose he is called elsewhere the *first begotten of the dead.* Again [this day] signifies eternity. It is most certainly to be believed, that God did beget his Son before all time, even from everlasting. There is a place to this purpose, *Heb.* 1. 4, 5. where the Apostle saith, that *Christ hath a more excellent Name, than the Angels*; because God the Father said of him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, which he never did say unto any of the Angels. And mark, I pray, the Apostle saith, that Christ obtained this more excellent name *by inheritance*, as being Gods natural Son: and therefore he had it from everlasting.

Secondly, In this day of eternity (if

I may so call it) God makes unto his Son a promise of a Church to be gathered among the Heathen. This promise was stipulated in the nature and manner of a decree : and all Gods decrees are eternall , and co-etaneous with himself : most true is the theoreme of the Philosopher ; *a voluntate antiqua non procedit actio nova* : from the ancient will (he means from Gods will) there doth not proceed any new act. God doth not begin to will any thing ; he doth not will any thing afresh ; because whatsoever he wills , from all eternity he will'd it : his will from everlasting to everlasting is one most pure and simple act : it is sometimes called a decree : but yet in respect of himself it is no such thing : for a decree supposeth some interval of time to be between the purpose and the execution ; and so there is , I confess , in respect of us : but to God it is not so ; for he is without all predicament of time : *one day is as a 1000 years, and a thousand years as one day with him* : those things that are past and to come with us , are eternally present with him. But to come to the point, Though the counsells of God

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be not properly decrees in respect of himself, for the reason before alledged: yet they are from eternity, and that is the thing that we drive at. The forementioned decree of gathering a Church from among the Heathen, was made when the Son of God was begotten: and he was begotten of old from everlasting, as we have proved. And it was not only a decree, but a promise also; it runs plainly in the form and tenor of a promise: *Aske of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession.*

Now then consider; how precious is that promise that was made in a familiar parly and conference between the Father and the Son from all eternity? Christ was foreseen and ordained even of old to be our *μεσiτης*, or Mediator: upon this ground God makes even then a gracious promise to him for us; a promise of giving us to him, and consequently of giving us eternall life through him. So that here we have plainly the reason why the Apostle saith, that *God promised eternall life before the world began*, Namely, because
Christ

Christ was even then in the counsell and purpose of God our Mediatour. And hence in another place, he saith, that *the grace of God, whereby we are called with an holy calling, and consequently everlastingly saved, was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,* 2 Tim. 1. 9. Christ Jesus was even then lookt upon as our Redeemer: God stipulates and promises to him; and he again restipulates to undertake for us. Certainly then the promise of eternall life must needs be exceeding precious, being the substance of that Dialogue (as I may say) and communication, which passed between the Father and the Son before the world was created. And if that great promise be so antient, then questionless so are all promises: because eternal life doth eminently contain in it all other blessings, just as the heaven of heavens doth all inferiour parts of the world. Now how should the consideration of this stirr up our hearts to love Jesus Christ, who received promises for us, not only before we our selves were, but even before there was any time, or creature made.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Consider the precious things that are couched in the promises, and they appertain either to temporal life, or to spiritual grace, or to eternal glory.

First, Great and precious are the promises, which do appertain unto this life. *Godliness* (saith the Apostle) *hath the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come.* And even in this respect, God hath promised never to leave us, nor forsake us, Heb. 13. 5. There are in this place no less than five negatives to strengthen and confirme our faith in the truth of the promise; *οὐ μὴ, οὐδ' οὐ μὴ*; as if he should have said, I will in no wise, whatsoever come of it at any time forsake thee; mine eye shall be still upon thee, and I will watch over thee for good continually. And mark, I pray, what the Prophet saith, *Esa. 63. 9. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and carried them all the days of old.* The place may be read interrogatively thus, *Was he not afflicted? &c.* That is, did he not take to heart the wrongs done to his people in *Agypt*? *Was not*
Christ

Christ the Angel of Gods presence their Conductor and Saviour? Did he not bear them, as a tender Mother or Nurse doth her young childe? Did he not carry them, as the Eagle doth her brood, with such care, that she her self may not hurt them, and at such a height, as others may not reach them? In such manner doth Christ for ever protect his people. In Zach. 2. 5. he promises to be a wall of fire round about them: where the Holy-Ghost alludeth to the practice of Travailleurs in the Wilderness, who by surrounding themselves with a fire, did thereby fray away the wilde beasts, and kept them off from annoying them: now such a defence will Christ be unto his Saints; he will be with them in most deadly dangers, When they pass through the water, and when they walk through the fire, Esa. 43. 2. Fire and water are two most devouring elements, good servants, but bad masters, as we say; and therefore here they are put for all other perilous and dangerous kindes: Christ will save and deliver his people from them all. We read, Dan. 3. 25. that the three Children were cast into the fiery furnace:

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But what said the Tyrant ? *I see four* (saith he) *and the fourth is like the Son of God* : and in all probability it was so ; it being usual under the old Testament for Christ , upon some weighty occasions to appear in humane shape. Thus Christ will be with his people in the furnace of affliction ; and either he will provide that it shall not be overheated , or else he will work a miracle to restrain the power of the flames : he will both preserve them in , and deliver them out of trouble : he will so sanctifie affliction , that it shall prove a very blessing and mercy to them.

Secondly , Great also and precious are the promises , which appertain unto spiritual grace : the Apostle saith , *That by them we partake of the divine or godly nature* , 2. Pet. 1. 4. He doth not mean it of the essence or substance of God , as some of the Heathen conceited , affirming man to be *aura divina particula* , a little piece of the divine Spirit : Thus did the *Platonicks* dream , and also the *Manichees* and *Priscillianists* : not so , I say ; for the essence of God is incommunicable : but we are to understand it of the graces of the Spirit , whereby

whereby the image of God is stamp
 again and restored in man: therefore
 the Apostle doth not call it θεότης, that
 is, the essential nature of God: but
 θεῶν φύσιν, the godly nature; as if he
 had expressed it in one word, *θειότης*,
 Saint-hood, or a nature approaching to
 Gods, resembling and like unto Gods.
 So that Believers through Christ have
 in their souls a lively image and repre-
 sentation of the perfections, of the vir-
 tues, and of the life of God: according
 to that of the Apostle, *Colos. 3. 10. And*
have put on the new man, which is renew-
ed in knowledge, after the image of him
that created him: he puts knowledge,
 which is the incipient part of regenera-
 tion, for the whole, including under
 that, both holiness and righteousness.
 And answering to this is that precious
 promise, *Esa. 65. 17. where the Lord*
saith, That he will make new heavens, and
a new earth: This is meant of the spiri-
 tual excellency of the Church, in re-
 gard both of doctrine, of discipline,
 and of life: and therefore it holds forth a
 promise concerning the renewing of the
 soul by the Spirit of the Lord: where
 doctrine is sound, discipline wholesome,
 and

and life holy, there are new Heavens and a new earth, as I may say, and there the soul is become a new creature by the sanctifying Spirit of God.

Lastly, great and precious also are the promises appertaining to eternal glory: they contain in them that heavenly inheritance of the Saints in Light, where they shall have blessed communion with God, with Christ, with the Holy Spirit, with elect Angels, and with one another for ever: where they shall have the quintessence of all good things, the sweetness of all Mercy and consolation: where they shall have the splendour and bright rayes of everlasting honour; where after this life (and this life is but a bubble, a smoke, a wind, a shadow) they shall have that unutterable & immortall Crown of glory set upon their heads, which Christ hath promised: in a word, where they shall have *totum quod volunt*, & *nihil quod nolunt*, all that they would have, and nothing that they would not have: Hence it is, that the Gospel, which holdeth forth the promise of these things, is termed glorious, and the ministration thereof likewise glorious. And therefore

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as the Apostle makes the comparison between the Law and the Gospel: *if the ministration of death and condemnation be glorious* (saith he) *how shall not the ministration of the Spirit and of righteousness be rather glorious?* so may I say: if the glory of Christ be so splendid and shining, so attractive and alluring even in the promise and expectation of it: what then will it be in the full fruition and enjoyment thereof? if so excellent and surpassing, at a distance, and through the lattice, as I may say: what will it be in the nearest touch and vision thereof, when we shall come our selves to participate of that glory? *Now we see but in a glass darkly*, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 13. 12. that is, here we see God but as we see our own Image in a glass, and not the very face it self; here we see him by a kind of reflection, and at second hand, as I may say, in the Ordinances, in the creatures, and such like dim representations, which at the farthest are in some sense ænigmaticall, full of intricacy and obscurity. But then we shall see God face to face; and then we shall know him, as we our selves are known by him, that is to say, perfectly;

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ly; I mean with such a perfection as a glorified creature is capable of. Thus have I shewed unto you what excellent and precious things are contained in the Promises for our souls, and for our bodies, for this life and for the life to come for ever: & then how much more precious and excellent, how much more to be desired and longed for is Jesus Christ, by whom so manifold and unspeakable blessings are conveyed unto us!

Mot. 4. Fourthly, Christ hath bestowed upon Believers precious love, and precious it is, because Infinite.

Gracious.

Liberal.

Everlasting.

First, the love of Christ unto his Saints is infinite and unmeasurable: it is beyond all imagination or conception. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you,* saith Christ, *Joh. 15.9.* Now who can understand with what love the Father hath embraced his Son? Who can dive into the bottomless depth of that tender affection, which the infinite God beareth unto Christ? No more can we define and fully set forth what the love

love of Christ unto his Saints is: The Apostle indeed would have the *Ephesians* able to comprehend with all Saints, the breadth and length, the depth and height of the love of God in Christ: but yet for all that he concludes, that it passeth knowledge, *Ephes. 3. 18, 19.*

Secondly, Christ's love is a gracious love. That which the Lord speaks by his Prophet concerning *Jerusalem*, may fitly be applyed to all his people, *When I passed by thee and saw thee polluted or trodden under foot, (as the word signifieth) in thine own blood, I said unto thee, live.* That is, (as we use to apply it spiritually) when we were in our naturall filthiness and uncleanness, which we drew from our first Parents, God loved us freely, and not for our worth or merit: not for our beauty or comeliness: we had no worth in us, nor no beauty upon us: yet he loved us, and said unto us, live, that is, he made us to live spiritually; he did put the life of grace into us: he did breath into the nostrils of our souls (as I may say) the breath of heavenly life: his saying in this new Creation was as his saying was in the first Creation of all things: he did but speak

the word, and it was done. Again, he adds in the forementioned Propheſie, verſe the eight, *I ſpread my ſkirt over thee.* He alludeth to a cuſtom or Ceremony of the *Jews*, whereby at Marriages, the Husband in token of his Interſt and propriety, and alſo as a pledge of his moſt tender love and endeared affection to his wife, did cover her with a lap or ſkirt of his garment: now this matrimonial rite was a figure of the merit of Chriſt, who hath by his righteouſneſs covered all our ſins and tranſgreſſions, veiled all our filthineſs and pollutions, and hid all our ſpiritual nakedneſs, and deformities, and that moſt freely, moſt graciously, moſt undeſervedly, according to that *Hosea 14. 4. I will heal their back-sliding; I will love them freely.*

Thirdly, Chriſts love to his Saints is a liberal love, a munificent, a magnificent and bountifull love: this appears plainly by thoſe hard and bitter things, that he underwent for us, *Philip. 2. 7.* the Apoſtle ſaith, that *he made himſelf of no reputation: he took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likenneſs, or habit of men.* The original word in the

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the place signifieth, that he emptyed himself, or *redexit se ad nihilum*, he brought himself, as it were to nothing: he de-vested and stript himself of the robes of Divine Majesty, laying them, his Throne, his Crown, and his Scepter of Glory aside for a while. Through the extremity of his agony his body did sweat drops of blood: he did exhaust such an infinitely rich and precious treasure, as all Heaven and earth could not recompense and make up again. It is reported of the *Pelican*, that she openeth her breast with her bill, and feedeth her young ones with the blood distilling from her: and therefore (saith mine Author) the Egyptians did make that kind an Hieroglyphick of Piety and Pity, and upon that consideration they spared them at their Tables. Now this creature is a lively picture and Embleme of Christ: he parted with that, which was most dear unto him; the soul in his body, the blood in his veins, and (which was more, than all the rest) the sweet and ravishing apprehensions of his Fathers love eclipsed, and darkned in his agonies, and so totally eclipsed, that he cryed out with

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a loud voice, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And all this he did in his infinite pity and love to us: the Apostle saith, that he *loved his Church and gave himself for it*, Ephes. 5. 25.

Lastly, Christ's love is eternal and everlasting: a love that never decays or waxeth old; like the stone *Asbestos*, of which I read in *Solinus*, that being

* *Iul. 56.* once hot, it can * never be cooled again.
lin: poly- The love of Christ is like a Fountain
histor. cap. ever flowing, and never dried up: or

12.

like the sacred fire, which never went out. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*, saith he, *Jer. 31. 3.* and in another place, *with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee*. Though the Saints offend Christ often, yet he loves them still: he onely purges them and heals them of their spiritual maladies, which cannot be done without some smart: but he doth not a whit lessen, or detract his love from them. Though his people come upon him every day for new favours and new supplies; yet his goodwill is never wearied or tired out: yea though thousands, millions of his Saints press upon him at once; yet he hath for them all, and the Fountain of his
 love

love is never emptyed. I like the matter of the Poet very well ; although, I confess his verse be something jiggish and toying.

Sumit unus, sumunt mille :

Quantum isti, tantum ille :

Neque sumptus absumitur.

One Believer draws water of life, and supply of all needfull blessings out of this Well of salvation ; and a thousand like gracious souls do the like ; and the one draws as much as the thousand : and yet the Well is never drawn drie. Now then a little to re-capitulate. If the love of Christ unto his Saints be infinite, boundless and unmeasurable, if it be gracious, free, and undeserved, if it be liberal, rich, and bountiful. Lastly, if it be eternal, everlasting, and never decaying, ô what a whetstone should this be to our affections, what a spur to our Spirits, and what a bellows to blow up, and kindle the fire of our love to Christ ? nothing doth more conciliate and attract love, than love it self : it were horrible ingratefulness not to spend, and be spent (as the Apostle speaks) for one that hath loved us so much, as Christ hath done : certainly if

love do not draw us unto him, nothing will. The acts of Christ's love are the cords wherewith he draws souls unto himself. *I drew them with the cords of a man, with hands of love*, saith he, *Hosea*, 11. 4. and in another place, *with loving kindness have I drawn thee* *. 'Tis an Argument then, that we are not drawn at all, if love do not effect it.

Mat. 5. Fifthly, Christ bestows upon Believers his precious Spirit. That is that, which Christ promiseth to his Disciples, *Joh.* 14. 26. *The comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name (saith Christ) he shall teach you all things, &c.* Now let us consider how excellent the Spirit is, in all the workings of it upon our hearts, and then we shall see what a precious and lovely gift this is.

The Spirit of Christ doth these things.

It illuminates our minds.

It sanctifies our natures.

It seals our adoption.

First of all, the Spirit of Christ doth illuminate the mind and understanding: it opens the windows of the soul, as I may say, and sets up a new Light in it:

it : it brings in light upon light. Even by nature men have some Light, such as it is : by Art and industry they acquire more : but the saving Light of the Spirit of Christ far excelleth all that of the natural man, as the Light of the Sun doth the light of the Moon, or as the Light of seven dayes doth the light of one : hence is that Spirit by an excellency called *the Spirit of wisdom and understanding* : and it is said *to lead us and to guide us into all truth*, Joh. 14. 16. *I have many things* (saith Christ) *to say unto you : but you cannot bear them now : but when the spirit cometh, he shall lead you into all truth*, that is, he shall open your understandings, he shall enlarge your capacities, and shall make you able to comprehend those Divine and heavenly Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, which shall be dispenced unto you. *Ye have an unction from the Holy one* (saith the Apostle) *and ye know all things*, 1 Joh. 2. 20. The Holy one here spoken of is the whole Trinity, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost : the unction is not the Spirit it self : but a thing different from the essence and substance thereof : viz. the grace of illumination

nation and saving Knowledge, where-
 with the eyes of our minds being anoin-
 ted as with an unction, we come to
 know all things, not absolutely, and
 omnisciently, as God doth: but to
 know all things that are needfull to be
 known unto salvation. And hence in
 the 27. verse, the same anointing is said
to teach us, and that we need no other
 teaching, but that: it is called *eye-salve*,
Revel. 3. 18.

Secondly, the Spirit of Christ sancti-
 fieth the hearts and nature of Believers,
 whereby they are really changed from
 the filthiness of sin unto the purity of
 Gods Image; that as Christ himself is
 holy, so are they in some measure by an
 inherent holiness: their love and their
 hatred, their joy and their sorrow, all
 their passions and affections, are not
 such as they were before, but they are
 quite altered and changed, new-moulded
 and fashioned, made after Gods own
 heart, and conformed to his holy will.
 This is the blessed work of the Spirit;
*We are sanctified through the Spirit and be-
 lief of the truth*, saith the Apostle,
2 Thess. 2. 13. The Spirit is principal in
 stamping the Image of God upon the
 soul;

soul: the Spirit it is that doth convey the efficacy of Christ's death and blood unto us. Hence it is called in Scripture wind, fire, water, and the like.

First, it is a wind. *Awake o North, and come thou South, Cant. 4. 16.* and that for these reasons. As wind allayeth heat: so the sanctifying Spirit of God asswageth hot and burning distempers in the soul; it suppresses inordinate and lustful desires, moderating all our affections, and keeping them in a good temper. Again, as wine purges the air, and dries up superfluous moisture in the earth: so the Spirit purgeth our corrupt natures, and dries up the excrementitious humours of sin, which are Enemies to spiritual health. Also * as the wind is a great fructifier, causing the fruits of the earth to spring out: so the Spirit of God makes that soul, which naturally is, as a barren and dry wilderness, (no plants of grace growing in it; but the weeds of sin rankling every where,) to be a fruitful and flourishing garden, where Christ delights to walk and to take his repast, beholding how his trees of Righteousness do spread, and blossom, and bear most pleasant fruit.

*Favoni-
us the
West-
wind, di-
citur a
favendo,
from che-
rishing of
fruits and
other
things.*

fruit. When the wind of the Spirit doth blow upon the garden of the soul, then the spices of grace flow out: then Christ may come into his garden and eat his delicious fruits of union and Sanctification. The soul is not now an empty vine, neither doth it bear wild grapes; it doth not bear grapes of gall and bitter clusters, but fruits of Righteousness and holiness, most sweet and well relishing, most pleasing and acceptable to Christ.

Again, the wind is a quickning and enlivening thing: the breath of every living creature is a wind: *Come from the four winds ô breath, and breath upon these slain, that they may live*, saith the Prophet, *Ezek. 37. 9*. Now such is the Spirit of God also; it raiseth up the soul from the death of sin, and puts the life of grace into it: it sets us upon our feet and makes us to walk before God in the Light, and in the land of the living.

Lastly, As the wind is not in the power of any man, *it bloweth where it listeth*, as our Saviour saith; and it is impossible to hide it, *Prov. 27. 16*. So the Spirit of regeneration is not at the arbitrement,

bitrement, will, and disposing of any creature: but it is *sui juris*, at its own choice and disposing, at its own pleasure, when, where, and how it will breath and dispense grace. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*, saith the Apostle, *Jam. 1. 18.*

Secondly, the Spirit of sanctification is also called fire in the Scriptures; *He shall baptize you with the Holy-Ghost, and with fire*, Mat. 3. 11. It resembles fire in the purging property thereof; as fire is a great purger, attracting and drawing corrupt airs to it self, segregating and severing pure substances from dross, as we see in the trying of gold and silver: so doth the fire of the Spirit draw away from our souls all pestilent and infectious fents of sin, and by little and little purges away all the dross of our corruptions.

Again, The Spirit resembles fire in the consuming property thereof: fire purgeth onely, when it meets with a substance that can endure it: but when it lights upon combustible matter, then it waists and consumes: so the fire of the Spirit doth no more, than purge the hearts of the Elect: yet it waists and consumes

sumes their lusts, because they be things to be wasted and abolished.

Lastly, The Spirit of grace resembles fire in the assimilating property thereof: Fire turns other things that are approximate into its own nature: it makes things hot, as it self is hot: it propagates and spreads it self, increasing its own flames by licking up and catching in other things to it self: so the sanctifying Spirit of God doth fire our hearts and affections, heating them with his own heat, kindling them with his own sacred sparks, assimilating and making us like unto himself: holy, as he is holy, pure, as he is pure, and perfect, as he is perfect. The soul being acted and wrought upon by the Spirit, is changed into the same glory, and becomes spiritual, like it self. We know that a paper will smell of the musk or civet that is put in it: so a soul endued with the Spirit of grace, cannot but become gracious: it must have the same savour, the same odoriferous and pleasing sent that the Spirit it self hath.

Thirdly, The precious Spirit, which Christ bestows upon his Saints, is called water also; because as water washeth
 1. away

away the filthiness of the flesh; so doth the Spirit the uncleannesses of the soul. And again, as water hath a softning and suppling vertue with it: so the gracious Spirit of Christ doth mollifie and soften hard hearts; making them of impenetrable and insensible, to become broken and contrite, of stubborn and forward, to be flexible and pliable unto Gods holy will: so that though they were before, like Leviathans heart, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone; yet now they can tremble at judgments, submit to commands, and be glad to close with the promises of Christ. Thus you see that the Spirit which Christ bestows upon his Saints, is a sanctifying, a purging, a regenerating, a renewing Spirit.

Lastly, This Spirit sealeth our adoption, our filiation or son-ship unto us. By adoption we are received into the number of the sons of God; and by the Spirit of Christ we come to be assured of this prerogative. The Spirit of God seals up our salvation and blessed state unto us: The Apostle saith, *That God hath sealed us and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, 2 Cor. 1.

22. He hath given us the earnest of his Spirit for the assurance of our heavenly inheritance. The Apostles manner of speaking is taken from the custom of men, who to assure and confirm others in the truth of their promises and covenants, are wont to set their seal to bills and bonds, and such like instruments: so God sets his seal to all his promises, and to the covenant of grace, which he hath plighted with us, by giving us his holy Spirit to renew us, to imprint his image upon our souls, and to bear witness within us, that we are his children, and consequently heirs of life and glory everlasting. Now this Spirit is expressly called *the Spirit of the Son*, Gal. 4. 6. Because the Holy-Ghost sealeth up our adoption in Christ: so that through Christ it is made sure unto us. Let us now sum up all which hath been said of this gift: if Christ hath not withheld his gracious Spirit from us, but hath given even that unto us, to enlighten us, to sanctifie us, and to assure us of our adoption and salvation: where can we find greater favour, than this? and where should our mindes be lifted up into the opinion of any thing more, than

then of Christ & Doubtless, the giver of such a precious gift, ought himself to be much more precious unto us. If we make great account of the gift, much more ought we most highly to esteem of the bestower of it.

Lastly, Christ bestows upon Believers precious priviledges : and they are many : but I will speak onely of these two.

Access to the throne of grace.

Good successes of our prayers.

First, Believers have blessed access ; *Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace* (saith the Apostle) *that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,* Heb. 4. 16. The Apostles phrase is μετὰ παρρησίας, a word which signifieth liberty of speech, and boldness of face, when a man intrepidly and undauntedly utters his mind before great ones, without blushing, without weakness of heart, without shaking of his voyce, without halucination, imperfection and faltring in speech ; when neither majesty nor authority can take off his courage, so as to stop his mouth, and make him afraid to speak. With such spirits would the Apostle have us to
R come

come unto God by prayer : we must come with paresie , with confidence of heart, and freedom of speech. This is a fruit of our access to the throne of grace, to which doubtless the Apostle would never have exhorted us , if we were not blessed with such a privilege.

Again, A like exhortation we have *Heb. 10. 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, ἐν πληροφροσίᾳ πίστεως, in full assurance of faith*, that is, in steadfastness of faith , without wavering , without doubting. The Apostle means it of our full assurance of Gods favour , and acceptance of our persons in Christ. In the Law, the high Priest going into the Sanctuary , did bear upon his shoulders, and in his pectoral or brestplate, the names of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*. Now this figures unto us the great love that Christ bears unto his people : he hath them alwayes at his heart ; he loves them most tenderly and dearly : he bears them also upon the shoulders of his mighty protection, carrying them aloft out of the reach of all adversary power. And he is gone into the heavenly Sanctuary with *Urim* and *Thummim* ,

him, with the names of his people upon his breast, for a memorial before the Lord continually: so that now through his mediation we may draw near unto God in pferophorie, and full assurance of faith: nothing doubting but that God will for his sake accept both of our persons and of our prayers.

Secondly, Believers have not onely access to God, but also good success of all their suits and petitions, which they put up unto him. Christ by his office of mediation and intercession, is an advocate for his people, and doth in his own person appear before God for them: he takes upon himself their suit and their cause, as an Advocate in Law doth his Clients. Hence is that exceeding sweet and consolatory promise of the Apostle, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. *If any man sin (saith he) we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* Here is never a word, but hath sweetness in it. Mark, I pray; first he saith, *If any man sin*; not as though there were some that did not sin: for that this very Apostle beats against expressly in the end of the first Chapter: but when

he saith, *If any man*, he speaks cordial things; he speaks to the heart and comfort of sinners, shewing that with God there is no accepting of persons; but all without exception of any for exteriour adjuncts and qualities, do find grace in his sight through Christ: this is plainly the inference of the indefinite particle, *Any*.

Secondly, He saith, *That we have an Advocate*: an Advocate is a forensical word, and it signifieth properly one that is called to, or assumed as an Assistant, as a friend, as an helper, as an Intercessor: such Advocates did guilty ones among the Greeks and Romans assume to themselves. Now such an Advocate is Christ unto us: he is our Patron, he is our spokes-man, he it is that pleadeth our cause for us; he it is that by the merit of his expiation doth intreat for us. The Devill is called our *Avsiðmos*, our Adversary, another Law-term, 1 Pet. 5. 8. he lays in hard against us, and therefore he is elsewhere called the *Accuser of the Brethren*: and guilty we are too: but Christ is our *παράκλητος*, our Advocate, and he intreats the Judge for us: he implores mercy and clemency for us.

Third.

Thirdly, the Apostle saith, that *we have an Advocate with the Father*; with him still at his right hand: so with him, that he is his own natural Son: so with him, that he needs but onely shew himself for us, and without speaking any word we are accepted. *At that day* (namely at that day when I shall be ascended into heaven) *ye shall ask in my Name* (saith Christ) *and I say unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you; because ye have loved me, and have believed, that I came out from God, Joh. 16. 26, 27.* In these words Christ bids us not so to depend and hang upon him, as to have no confidence in God the Father, as if he were angry with us, and did not love us. Christ is so an Advocate with the Father, as that the Father is made ours fully and perfectly: and so the eager and malicious adversary can do nothing against us.

Fourthly, Our Advocate is Jesus, a most sweet and heart-refreshing name; it signifieth a Saviour; one that doth not onely intreat for us, but perfectly save us: other Advocates may intreat, and not prevail; but Christ intreats

and prevails ; and so saves his people from their sins.

Fifthly, He is called Christ ; there's an addition and increase of comfort in this name ; it signifies anointed. Christ was anointed to be our Prophet , to shew us the wayes of life and salvation : he was anointed to be our Priest, to offer a reconciling sacrifice for us. And he was also anointed to be our King , to protect us, and to destroy all our enemies.

Sixthly, Our Advocate is called the Righteous, by an eminency, none so righteous, as he : he is perfectly righteous : so that he needs not, as other Advocates, to plead for himself : he pleadeth onely for us : and he must needs have good success in his pleading ; because he is righteous himself : he is the Righteous ; just, and a justifier ; absolutely and compleatly righteous by his own inherent purity ; and conveying righteousness to us by imputation.

Lastly, our Advocate is such an one as stands in our room , and takes the whole penalty and punishment due to us for our offence upon himself : therefore the Apostle adds, that he is *the propitiation for our sins*, that is, he is the sacrifice

crifice that implores and begs pardoning Mercy for us. *Hence the blood of sprinkling*, that is, the blood of Jesus Christ, is said to *speak better things, than that of Abel*, Heb. 12. 24. for of Abels, God speaks thus: *the voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me from the ground.* Abels blood cried unto God for vengeance to be executed upon Cain that murdered him, but the blood of Christ crieth unto God for mercy to be shewed unto poor miserable sinners. Now then if Christ be our Advocate, if he be an Advocate with the Father, always in his presence, always near and dear unto him; if he be an Advocate, mighty to save; if he be an Advocate separated and sanctified of God himself, and anointed to bear Office for us; if he be an Advocate perfectly righteous and blameless in his own person; if he be such an Advocate, as is willing to stand in our stead, and to bear the burthen of our deserts, like him that cried out when he saw his friend ready to be slain.

Me me! Adsum qui feci; in me convertite ferrum.

Me me; I am he that did the fact, turn your sword upon me; Lastly, if he be

such an Advocate as refuses none, but receives all without exception, that come unto him: if Christ, I say, be such an Advocate, such a day's-man, so every way qualified and furnished to do us good, then surely it cannot be, but that the prayers, which we present unto God in his name must find acceptance, and obtain a glorious return. *Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name; he will give it you,* saith Christ, *Joh. 16. 23.* Christ puts incense upon our prayers and mingles them with the sweet odours of his own merits; he is the onely Altar of Christians, sanctifying all their gifts and sacrifices. Thus you have a taste of the excellent priviledges of Believers: through Jesus Christ they have access to the Throne of Grace; and all their petitions find acceptance with God, returning (as the Spies did out of Canaan) with great and weighty clusters of blessings, or (as *Jacobs* sons did from their brother *Joseph*) full and loaden with good things. O then how precious, how lovely, how longed for ought Jesus Christ to be, who accumulates and heaps such royal favours upon us? who stores us with such rich and
 inestimable

inestimable gifts, who gives us free ingress into the presence of God, and regress from him with joyfull hearts; who makes way for our prayers, that they may come, as things of worth unto his Father, and sends them back again with good newes; and glad tidings of blessed success: how precious, I say, and how highly to be esteemed, and regarded is such a Benefactour, as this? how ought we to draw out all our love, and the very strength of our affections to cast them upon such a lovely object as this, and to embrace Jesus Christ, who hath done for us *above all that we can either name, or think?* I pass now to some means by which we may awaken, and stir up our affections unto Christ. And herein I shall give no other directions, than the Church doth to the daughters of *Jerusalem* in *Cant. 5. 10, &c.* And the occasion was this. The Church was seeking Christ earnestly, and diligently, and in her seeking, enquires of the daughters of *Jerusalem* for her beloved: upon which the daughters utter these words. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, o thou fairest among women?* The Church for answer, and as a means
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to draw forth the affections of the daughters; sets forth exactly the high perfections and excellencies of Christ: & she doth anatomize him in every part, and particularize him in every excellency, setting him forth, thus:

First, the Church describes Christ in general, and that two ways.

1. Positively.

2. Comparatively.

First, positively; *my beloved is white and ruddy*, verse 10. that is, he is of the most compleat, perfect, healthy constitution. The strongest complexion and constitution is noted by these two colours; white and ruddy: and it denotes unto us the power and omnipotency of Christ, whereby he is able to do the greatest things in the world. Also his *whiteness* denoteth his purity and Righteousness: and *ruddy*; his own blood and sufferings; and likewise his vengeance on his enemies, for he *hath his garments dipt in blood*, *Isaiah 63. 2.*

Secondly, comparatively, *he is the chief of ten thousand*: or *having דגול the banner above ten thousand*. Christ is the Standard-bearer of ten thousand, that doth excell all men and Angels, and all other

other creatures in the world. Now in Armies, the goodliest men use to carry the Ensign or banner: so Christ is incomparable beyond all other, and hath the perfections of Angels, of men, and of all creatures beside. Again, the Ensign is a warlike Instrument, and the bearer thereof, one of the chief: so Christ is *for the Ensign of his people, Isa. 11. 10. And all the Armies in Heaven and earth do follow him, Rev. 19. 11.* the Saints they worship him, the Angels they adore him; for he is *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah*: and he is *the first-born of God, set above all the Kings of the Earth.*

Secondly, the Church descends from her general commendations of Christ; to that which is more particular, setting him forth by all the members and lineaments of his body.

First, the Church begins with Christs head, which is the most eminent part of all the body. *His head is as the most fine gold, verse 11.* that is, Christ hath a head most glorious and excellent, most splendid and shining, as pure as gold. This denotes unto us the beauty, dignity, eminence, and government of Christ.

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As gold is of a splendid and durable nature ; so is the government and dignity of Christ everlasting and durable, it is Divine and heavenly, and of a glorious extent.

2. *His locks are curled, and black as a Raven*, verse 11. Black and curled locks are a sign of a hot brain, and they do argue quickness, and dexterity of wit and strength : this denots to us the vigour and strength of Christ, and the depth of all his counsels.

3. *His eyes are as Doves eyes by the streams of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set*, verse 12. that is, his eyes are *pure as Doves* : so that he cannot behold any evil with the least approbation : and they are *quick* to search all things : and they are *white as milk*, in that he doth behold his people in grace and mercy : Lastly, his eyes are *fitly set* ; that is, as a Diamond in a ring, or, as the filling stones, which are set in the hollow places of the golden Ephod, *Exod. 25. 7.* and these stones were called *stones of fulness*, because they did fit the hollow places in that golden Ephod. In like manner Christ hath steady eyes, he is not goggle eyed, (as we say) but his eyes
are

are steady and firm, they are as a stone set in a gold ring, which cannot be turned out of its place: so are Christs eyes evermore guiding his sight to look perfectly into all things, both into the depth of Gods Counsels, and into the depth of mans heart and understanding.

4. *Christs cheeks are as a bed of spices; as sweet flowers*, verse 13. that is, he is like a bed of sweet spices, or growu plants, that serve for perfume. This denotes and shewes unto us Christs beauty and grace, his comeliness and gravity to all that do behold him. All Christs graces are sweet, and his sight & countenance hath a transforming vertue in it, it makes those that behold Christ to be like unto him, while others behold his glory, *they are transformed into the same Image of his glory, from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. 3. 18.

5. *His lips are like dropping sweet smelling myrrh*, verse 13. The Lillies are fair and sweet of themselves; yet he adds, *they drop pure myrrhe*, This is to be referred unto the holy, heavenly, sweet and gracious Doctrine of Christ. *Honey and myrrh*, that is, love and mercy, grace and goodness did flow out of Christ.

Christs lips: so its said in *Psal.* 45. 1. *grace was in his lips.* Christs heart was a treasure full of all Divine grace and goodness, then needs must his lips be sweet; yea, and far surpass in sweetness honey and myrrh.

6. *His hands are as gold Rings, set with a berill, or Chrysolite,* verse 14. The hebrew word *חֲרָטִים* put for Chrysolite, signifieth a precious stone. The hands of Christ are set forth with all ornaments and precious stones, and shining rings of Gold. This denotes unto us not onely the person of Christ; but also his actions and workings. The operations of Christ are admirable and full of Majesty, if we consider them in the course of the creatures, in the Sun, Moon, Stars, in the growth of herbs and plants; so in all the Creation of the world, in gubernation, in ordering of the event of all things, and the like. The works of God are incomprehensible, as in *Job*, 9. 12. *who shall say unto him what dost thou?* that is, the things which he doth are too high for mans understanding. Now as all the government of *Egypt* went through the hands of *Joseph*; so all the works of God go through

through the hands of Christ. The Father hath committed all his Judgments and works into the hands of his Son, glorious therefore are the works, which Christ doth perform both in Heaven and in earth.

7. *His breast, or belly is overlaid with Saphires, as bright Ivory, ver. 14.* Ivory and Saphires are precious and beautiful: and with these Christ hath his belly overlaid. This denotes unto us the bowels and inward affections, the tender mercy and pityful commiserations of Christ toward his Saints and Children.

8. *His leggs are as pillars of Marble, set upon sockets of fine gold, ver. 15.* That is, Christs wayes are full of Majesty and power, and as Marble pillars they are firm and constant, having sockets of Gold to sustain them, and to bear up his feet, whereby his way is perfect, by which he walks safely, treading down his enemies under his feet, and bringeth glad tidings of peace unto his people.

9. *His looks, or countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars, ver. 15.* that is, Christ was of a goodly and tall stature,

stature, like unto the Cedars of *Lebanon*, a goodly Mountain on the North side of the Land of *Canaan*. This shews the majesty and countenance of Christ, when he shall plead for his Church and people against their Enemies

10. *His mouth or palate is sweet*, ver. 16. this is the same with his lips, and shewes how sweet and comfortable, how gracious and amiable the Doctrine of the Gospel is, this expression is here again repeated to shew, that Christ is better known in *Sion*, than in any other place. All the works of Christ are glorious, but his Gospel exceeds them all in glory. The Gospel is the glass; wherein we see the glory of Christ more clearly, than in any other way; therefore the words of Christ are much more sweet to a Believers taste, than honey, or the most sweetest of spices are unto the mouth.

Lastly, Christ is precious and amiable in his whole self: *yea, he is altogether lovely*, ver. 16. that is, Christ is lovely in general, and he is lovely in particular: he is lovely in all parts, and altogether: yea, he is altogether lovely. As if the Church should have said, what shall I say

say more of my beloved? *he is all over, and altogether lovely.* Christ was lovely to God, to Angels, to Saints: hee was lovely in his nature and person, in his Offices and graces, yea, *he is all over lovely*, he is wholly delectable.

The Church having thus described her beloved, she concludeth with an exclamation, *this is my beloved, and this is my friend, oh daughters of Jerusalem*: this is he, that I sought with so much diligence, and for whom I was sick of love: this is he, that shall have my best affections, in whom I desire to glory in: *this is my friend, oh ye daughters of Jerusalem.*

In the next words, we may take notice of the effect, that this commendation of Christ hath upon the daughters of *Jerusalem*. *Whither is thy Beloved gone, oh thou fairest among women? whither is thy Beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?* The daughters hearing such a high commendation from the Church of her Beloved: hearing of his riches and glory, and of his beauty and excellency, she is enflamed with a desire to seek Christ also.

now from this singular effect, which

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this commendation of Christ wrought in the daughters of *Jerusalem* : Ministers of the Gospel may learn and see what their chief duty is ; namely , to display those rich treasures of grace , and that splendid shining glory , which is in Christ , to publish and spread before men those manifold excellencies , which be in him , to draw and allure them unto Christ. The Ministers of the Gospel should imploy their whole force and strength this way , that poor souls may be drawn to esteem highly of Christ. Who will seek after that , which he knows not of ? and who will not seek after a precious jewel ? O then tell people where this jewel , this pearl , this treasure is , that they may seek & search , and become Merchants for to adventure all for Jesus Christ.

To conclude , study then all his excellencies , riches , beauty , loveliness , offices , and the nature of Christ : meditate upon whole Christ , and upon all the parts of him ; and never give over until thou hast sweeten'd thy soul , enkindl'd thy love , and fixed all thy affections upon him. Meditate what Christ hath done for thee , what moved him

unto it; and likewise how unworthy thou art, and how thankful thou art, and let these meditations draw forth thy affections unto him.

Again, Feed upon Christs love; that which wee feed upon, turns into our own nature: love is fuell for it self; love feeds upon love, and the person beloved: so let us upon Christs love: the more we live upon Christs love, the more our love will be enflamed toward him. Kiss sweetly the glorified body of our crucified Saviour, with the lips of infinitely indeared and unexpressible affectionate love: though the distance be great between Christ and the soul; yet faith will bring them easily together.

Lastly, Go to the everlasting fountain of Christs blood; let the cock run; rence thy soul (as it were) in the blood of the Lamb; apply it for justification and sanctification; so shalt thou be free from the guilt and pollution of sin; thou dost ask but the acquittance, the debt being paid in Christ.

F I N I S.

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